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THE WORKS OF GRAY

EDITED BY THE REV. JOHN MITFORD

VOLUME II

ESSAY ON GRAY'S POETRY

LETTERS

THE

WORKS OF THOMAS GRAY

VOLUME II

LONDON

WILLIAM PICKERING

1835

THE

WORKS OF THOMAS GRAY

VOLUME II

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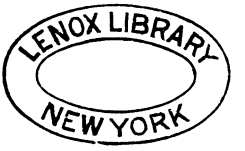
1835



CHARLES WHITTINGHAM
LONDON

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ESSAY ON THE POETRY OF GRAY.

I. On the Manner of Composition attributed to Gray by Mason. II. On the Harmony of his Verse, with some Remarks on Verbal Imitation in Poetry. III. On his Language or Poetical Diction. IV. On the Moral and Pathetic Character of his Writings. V. On the prophetic Character of the Bard; and on the construction of the Pindaric Ode. VI. On the Notes to this Edition. VII. On the Criticisms by Dr. Johnson on the Poetry of Gray.

I. To ascertain the method of composition adopted by a writer of established excellence, and to discover the principles upon which he constructed his poetry, is not only a subject of reasonable curiosity; but may prove of no small advantage in enabling us to unfold some of the causes both of his beauties and defects. Mr. Mason observes,* "that Gray's conceptions, as well as his manner of disposing them, were so singularly exact, that he had seldom occasion to make many, except verbal emendations, after he had first committed his lines to paper. It was never his method to

* See Mason's Memoirs of Gray, vol. iii. p. 157.

sketch his general design in careless verse; he always finished as he proceeded: this, though it made his execution slow, made his compositions more perfect." And in a note to that passage he adds: "I have many of his critical letters by me on my own compositions: letters, which, though they would not amuse the public in general, contain excellent lessons for young poets; from one of these I extract the following passage, which seems to explain this matter more fully: 'Extreme conciseness of expression, yet pure, perspicuous, and musical, is one of the grand beauties of lyric poetry: this I have always aimed at, and never could attain. The necessity of rhyming is one great obstacle to it: another, and perhaps a stronger, is that way you have chosen, of casting down your first thoughts carelessly and at large, and then clipping them here and there at leisure. This method, after all possible pains, will leave behind it a laxity, a diffuseness. The frame of a thought (otherwise well-invented, well-turned, and well-placed) is often weakened by it. Do I talk nonsense? Or do you understand me? I am persuaded what I say is true in my head, whatever it may be in prose; for I do not pretend to write prose.'" It cannot, however, be intended, that this account should be received without considerable limitations; as there exist sufficient proofs in the fragments of Gray's poetry to shew that, like other writers, when warmed by his subject,

he left one part of his poem unfinished, to arrest the images that spontaneously arose for another; and to preserve the chain of associations in his mind, unbroken and unimpaired. When any difficulty occurred in the conformation of one stanza, it is not probable that he permitted the fire of his imagination to grow cool, and the strength of his conceptions to be weakened; but passed on to that which presented itself in a happier and more perfect form. How far indeed the order and connexion in which our first thoughts present themselves, can be restored, if once broken, and the train of ideas recovered, which has been lost by minute exactness, and attention to other parts of the composition, is at least a questionable point; and deserving the consideration of those, who, without possessing that exactness of conception attributed to Gray by his biographer, may endeavour to imitate the example of so successful a writer. But perhaps this method of composition, if taken in its proper sense, cannot be called the peculiar practice of the poet, but rather common to all much accustomed to arrange their thoughts in writing, and whom use has made skilful and exact. In such a case, the thoughts and language seem to be selected by the mind by an instantaneous effort; when, in fact, they arise according to the artificial arrangement and combination which have been formed by the mental habits of the poet; and when they not seldom pre-

sent themselves in that finished order which no future study can improve.* This becomes at last the natural eloquence of the mind; the intimate connexion of language and thought: and according as our conceptions are clear, and our thoughts select, so will the words in which they are clothed acquire a proportionable correctness.

I think, however, that this art, or power of the mind, though it is in a great degree to be attributed both to the natural strength, and to the discipline of the poet's mind; yet will also very much depend upon the effect of the different measures, and even styles, used in the poems, in proportion as they confine or give liberty to the genius of the writer. In a short metre, the images and language will be presented to the mind of one practised in composition, by the confinement of the rhyme, and strictness of the measure, condensed, and moulded nearly into their finished form; or in other words, the mind of the writer will *feel* by experience, that such thoughts can assume a

* V. Johnson's Life of Pope. "By perpetual practice, language had in his mind a systematic arrangement, having always the same use for words; he had words so selected and combined as to be ready at his call."—See also Pope's advertisement to his Essay on Man, "I found I could express them (i. e. principles, maxims, &c.) more shortly this way, than in prose itself." Pope told Spence, that he wrote his Imitation of the first Sat. of Horace in *two* mornings, excellent as it is. Warton's Pope, vol. iv. p. 57.

ain shape in preference to any other: and can
ear, with more force and beauty, than could be
luced by any different arrangement. Whereas
lank verse, and other measures of looser tex-
and greater length, the same thoughts would
e room to expand into various shapes; would
capable of admitting different alterations and
binations of language; and the genius of the
might, as it were, flower off into something
wild and romantic luxuriance. Blank verse,
all measures of equal length, must derive
h of their effect from the artificial arrange-
t, and disposition of the style; by which words
common occurrence, and little elevated above
level of prose-writing, assume, in the unex-
ted order in which they are ranged, a new
earance, and a grace and dignity that would
otherwise belong to them. Accordingly, many
s of the Paradise Lost derive their poetical
ct from the disposition of the sentences, and
ngement of the words; where the language
lf is such as might be used with propriety
he plainest prose. To form this inverted lan-
ge, as it may be called, so as to preserve its
picuity, while it acquires force and elevation,
ands the most skilful and the finest art of the
t; and, in proportion to its difficulty, it is rea-
able to expect that alterations, and amend-
nts will be suggested by experience. The short-
s of the lyric stanza, prevents its deriving its

beauties, from *much* variation in the common structure of language. There is not room to alter in any great degree the usual arrangement of words, and yet to retain that clearness of expression and transparency of thought, which is always required:

'No words transpos'd, but in such order all,
As wrought with care, yet seem by chance to fall.'

Its beauties accordingly are derived from other sources, which compensate for its deficiency, in one material branch of the poetical art. Though it does not receive its chief beauty from common words skilfully arranged, it is adorned with expressions, selected with taste, and not lowered by familiarity; and while its structure does not admit the balanced and suspended harmony of a long period, it is able to assume another source of pleasure, from the agreeable impression of its rhymes. In this way, I think, we may account for the successive changes, as well as improvements, which so often take place in poems that afford a wide scope to the language of the writer, and which cannot be always attributed to inexperience, or want of practice; as in the different editions of the Seasons * of Thomson, the Pleasures of Imagination by Akenside, the English Garden by Mason, and other poems. In these, the reader will

* The authority of Dr. Johnson has given currency to an opinion, that the Seasons of Thomson have not been

observe, that it is not always the error or omission in the subject, but the unexhausted fancy of the poet, that leads to the alteration. It is mentioned

much improved by the successive alterations of every fresh edition. He says, that they lost that *raciness* which they at first possessed. This opinion, I may venture to say, is by no means correct. They improved very much and very rapidly in the course of the second and third edition; so much so, that I have often been struck, in reading them in the different stages of their improvement, with the uncommon change which must have taken place in the *taste* of the author during so short a period. For this change, in some degree, I can now account satisfactorily; as I possess an interleaved copy of the Seasons (of the edition of 1736) which belonged to Thomson, with his own alterations; and, with numerous alterations and additions by *Pope*, in his own writing. Almost all the amendments made by Pope, were adopted by Thomson in the last edition; and many lines in the Seasons, as they now stand, are Pope's own composition. The last four lines of the tale of Palæmon and Lavinia are Pope's entirely:

"The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine!
If to the various blessings which thy house
on me lavish'd
Has shower'd upon me, thou that bliss wilt add,
dearest
That sweetest bliss, the power of blessing thee!"

The four lines which Thomson wrote, and which stood in the place of these, in the printed edition of 1736, were:

"With harvest shining all the fields are thine!
And, if my wishes may presume so far,
Their master too, who then indeed were blest,
To make the daughter of Acasto so."

as a saying of Pope's, by the younger Richardson the painter, "that in Garth's poem of The Dispensary, there was hardly an alteration, of the

In the same episode, Thomson had printed the following lines:

"Thoughtless of beauty, she was Beauty's self,
Recluse among the woods; if city-dames
Will deign their faith: and thus she went compell'd
By strong Necessity, with as serene
And pleas'd a look as Patience e'er put on,
To glean Palæmon's fields."

These lines Pope erased, and wrote the following in their place, which now stand in the subsequent editions:

"Thoughtless of beauty, she was Beauty's self.
Recluse among the close embowering woods.
deep
As in the hollow breast of Apennine,
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills
A myrtle rises, far from human eyes,
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild:
So flourish'd blooming, and unseen by all,
The sweet Lavinia; till at length compell'd
By strong Necessity's supreme command,
With smiling Patience in her looks, she went
To glean Palæmon's fields."——

The 259th line of this episode now stands:

"And as he view'd her ardent, o'er and o'er:"

But in the edition of 1736, it is somewhat comically expressed:

"Then blaz'd his smother'd flame, avow'd and bold,
And as he *run* her ardent, o'er and o'er," &c.

This however Thomson himself altered.

erable ones through every edition, that was
r the better."* But in the didactic poems
ıned above, their looser measures† were
l at intervals to receive not so much the cor-
ıs of the writer's judgement, as the over-
gs of his imagination; and in this respect,

e Richardsoniana, p. 195, note. "A work" (says
lson) "that has had a great vogue, and which is
rds altered by the writer himself, is generally
: at first to be altered for the worse; as was the
th Garth's Dispensary. People had been so accus-
o read it over and over, and even to repeat whole
s by heart, of the first edition, that their ear could
r the change, and they thought it was their judge-
We now see fairly that every edition was for the
See Pack's Miscellanies, p. 102, and Johnson's
Garth, p. 59.

e Dryden's Prolegomena to his Essay on Dramatic
p. 13, ed. Malone. "The great easiness of blank
enders the poet too luxuriant. He is tempted to
ny things which might better be omitted; or at
shut up in fewer words. But when the difficulty
l rhyming is interposed, when the poet commonly
s his sense to his couplet, and must contrive that
ı such words that the rhyme shall naturally follow
ıot they the rhyme; the fancy then gives leisure to
lgement to come in, which, seeing so heavy a tax
l, is ready to cut off all unnecessary expenses.
st consideration has already answered an objection
ıome have made; that rhyme is only an embroidery
e, to make that which is ordinary in itself, pass for
ıt with less examination. But certainly that which
gulates the fancy, and gives the judgement its busiest
ment, is like to bring forth the richest and clearest
s."

they may perhaps be compared to those structures built by Saxon or Saracenic architects, which may be added to, or diminished, without destroying the integrity of the whole. In such poems there is so little artificial confinement of the verse, that the alterations which may be introduced at the will of the poet, are almost endless: and I think something akin to this will be acknowledged by any one, who, being much accustomed to the stricter habits of versification, for the first time begins to devote his attention, to composition in prose. Dryden said, that the verse of four feet,* that in which Hudibras, and the Fables of Gay,

* Almost all the old metrical romances or tales are written in *short metre*. Some, like 'Kynge Horne,' in verse of three feet only: a form of verse since used by Skelton. The assistance which this short measure, with the frequently recurring rhyme, must have given to the memory, could be no slight inducement for its continuance. The quick return of the rhyme also supplied the necessity of inverted phrase, and ornamental language; and was almost the only distinction, between verse and prose. When this was found tedious from the length of the poems, and when variety was demanded, the stanza with the alternate rhyme (the *rime entrelacée*) was introduced. To this cause may be attributed the use of rhyme in the Latin language, in what are called Leonine verses. When the "Bards of those degenerate days" could no longer support the verse by its proper materials of ornamented diction, graceful rhythm, and varied cæsura, they called in the assistance of rhyme; and when rhyme was once used, all attention to the other part of the versification, became absorbed, and lost in the importance of the final word.

and many lyrical compositions are written, did not give him room to turn round in. "I would prefer," he says, "the verse of ten syllables, which we call the English heroic, to that of *eight*. This is truly my opinion, for this sort of number is more roomy; the thought can turn itself with greater ease in a larger compass. When the rhyme comes too thick upon us, it straitens the expression. We are thinking of the close, when we should be employed in adorning the thought. It makes a poet giddy with turning in a space too narrow for his imagination; he loses many beauties, without gaining one advantage."* Certain it is that a short measure, such as has been just described, when once clothed in words, will hardly bear any transposition or alteration: it must be left almost as it was created; or, if touched, must be modelled entirely anew.* Indeed the difficulty

* See Dryden's Works, "Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of Satire," Vol. iv. p. 208, ed. Malone. One of the most pleasing examples of the harmony and variety of cadence that can be given to the verse of four feet, is "the Death of the Fawn," by Andrew Marvell. Much of this arises from the pause taking place in the middle, and not at the end of the line. Through the whole of this beautiful little poem, the pauses are skilfully varied, and the effect produced is excellent. Milton has varied the cadence of verse in his Penseroso and Allegro by other methods: his pauses almost invariably occur at the end of the line. Dyer introduced the *triplet* very happily indeed into his Grongar Hill for the same purpose.

* The Italian sonnet has, I believe, been called the touch-

of effecting any alteration in the lyrical stanza, with its confinement of metre and condensation of language, more especially if we also add the stricter construction by strophè and antistrophè, may be proved by any one who should attempt to vary the lines in The Bard, or other poems of Gray. Passages in any part of The Seasons might be introduced with facility; but how difficult would it be to supply, with any degree of satisfaction, the last stanza of the poem to Mr. Bent-

stone of genius; and it certainly cannot be composed successfully by any one who has not learned to confine his thoughts in clear and concise language. "La brevita del sonetto (says Lorenzo de Medici) non comporte, che una sola parola sia vana." And so Boileau, in his Art Poëtique, ii. 89:

"Surtout de ce poëme il bannit la licence:
Lui-même en mesura le nombre et la cadence;
Défendit qu'un vers foible y pût jamais entrer,
Ni qu'un mot déjà mis osât s'y remontrer.
Du reste, il l'enrichit d'une beauté suprême:
Un sonnet sans défaut vaut seul un long poëme."

This was a favourite species of composition with our elder poets, who derived their taste from Italy; with Spenser, Drayton, Daniel, and Drummond of Hawthornden. Milton was the last, I believe, of our *old* poets, who practised this species of composition; nor am I aware, that it was revived by any one before Gray wrote his 'Sonnet on the Death of West.' It certainly had no charms for Dryden or for Pope. There is a Sonnet prefixed to Richardson's Sir C. Grandison, and in the second volume, a Sonnet from Filicaia. Edwards's Sonnets also appeared in 1751.

ley: and how indifferently has even the poetical taste of Mr. Mason succeeded in his supplement to the Ode on Vicissitude!

If such had been Gray's habitual mode of composition in his lyrical verses, he would of course carry it to his poems of another form; and the additional difficulty which it would create in them, may partly account for the unfinished state, in which he left *all** those poems that are written in a longer and looser measure. Accustomed to the confinement of short metre, he would fluctuate in the choice of his words and expressions, when there

* The unfinished poem on the 'Alliance of Education and Government,' Mr. Mason remarks, "opens with *two similes*, an uncommon kind of an exordium;" but which he supposes the poet intentionally chose, to intimate the *analogical* method he meant to pursue in his subsequent reasonings. The younger Racine, in his Réflections sur la Poésie, p. 79, has touched upon this point: "Une *ode* peut commencer heureusement par une *double* comparaison, comme celle d'Horace: 'Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem.' Boileau commence un chant de L'Art Poétique par une comparaison: 'Telle qu'une bergère aux plus beaux jours de fête:' et j'ai vu plusieurs personnes ne pas désapprouver ce début d'un chant d'un autre poëme:

'Tel que brille l'éclair, qui touche au même instant
Des portes de l'aurore aux bornes du couchant,
Tel, que le trait fend l'air sans y marquer sa trace,
Tel, et plus prompt encor, part le coup de la grâce.'

Je n'en ai rapporté cet exemple que parceque je n'en *connois point d'autre d'un chant didactique commençant par une double comparaison.*" He alludes to his own poem.

appeared no superior reason at once to fix and enforce his decision; and the preference of language was not swayed by the measure of the poem. One may surely trace in the unusually compact style of his longer verses, that finished, close, and selected manner of composition, which belonged to another species of versification, and was brought from it. Since the first edition of this work was published, the editor has had the satisfaction of finding his opinion on this point corroborated by the authority of Mr. Gray himself. When Mr. Nicholls (says Mr. Mathias in his Observations on Mr. Gray's Writings, p. 52) once asked Mr. Gray why he never finished that incomparable fragment on 'The Alliance between good Government and good Education in order to produce the Happiness of Mankind,' he said *he could not*, and then explained himself in words of this kind, or to this effect: "I have been used to write chiefly lyric poetry, in which the poems being short, I have accustomed myself to polish every part of them with care; and as this has become a habit, I can scarcely write in any other manner. The labour of this, in a *long* poem, would hardly be tolerable; and if accomplished, it might possibly be deficient in effect, by wanting the chiaro-oscuro."

II. Among the distinguishing excellencies of the poetry of Gray, must of course be mentioned the peculiar harmony and variety of his versifica-

tion. This forms one of the principal sources of pleasure that we derive from poetry; in this every ear delights in proportion to the degree of its refinement, and a cultivated taste receives from it an exquisite gratification. It is impossible, indeed, not to observe the greatest skill in the harmony of his verse, and the adaptation of the measures to the subject; in the beauty of the metrical transitions, and in the effect which the numbers of one line, or stanza, are made to contribute to the other. The attention of Gray, it must be observed, was not paid to that inferior part of the art of imitation in verse, the resemblance of sounds and motions, or those properties of things which can be imitated by words, and which is called representative versification; but to that more extended imitation produced by the interchange and position of different measures in his poetry; by the harmony and correspondence of the different parts; by the variety of melody in arrangement and succession; and by the movement of the metre, rather than the sound of the words. This is peculiarly the province of lyrical poetry; and by this art, skilfully and properly applied, it is able to produce, perhaps, greater effects with language in a shorter compass, than any other species of poetry. Milton paid due attention to this point in his Lycidas. Some of the changes in the versification of that poem are admirably suited to the tenderness, and plaintive affection of the language:

nor has he shewn less skill, and taste in some of the lyrical parts of the Samson Agonistes. But, generally speaking, this beauty had not received much successful attention from the lyrical poets, before the time of Gray.

It has been observed by an acute critic,* "That, in general, the great defect of Milton's versification, in other respects admirable, is the want of coincidences, between the pauses of the sense and sound." If this observation † be deemed well founded, it may be partly accounted for, by considering the extreme attention paid by that learned poet to the composition of the ancient writers; and his endeavour to introduce much of the structure and genius of their languages into his own. In Greek and Latin versification, the singularity pointed out by the critic is very observable; not only in the hexameter, but in many

* See Lord Kames's Elements of Criticism, vol. ii. p. 167. Dr. Priestley, in his Lectures on Oratory and Criticism, has made the same remark, and quotes the following lines from Par. Lost, ix. 44:

——— "Unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing."

† In the preface by Atterbury, to the poems of Waller, (second part, 1690,) he says: Mr. Waller bound up his thoughts better, and in a cadence more agreeable to the nature of the verse he wrote in; so that wherever the *natural stops* of that were, he contrived the *little breakings of his sense*, so as to fall in with them."

different measures in which the lyrical poems
les were composed, where the dissonance be-
the subject and melody is very sensibly felt:
the ode, like all other poems, was originally
led to be sung or chanted, the metrical pause
f more consequence than the pause of the
, and was therefore more particularly distin-
ed in the musical recitation. In the two odes
int Cecilia, by Dryden, and Pope; however
ior the former may be in the style and spirit
composition, yet they both display the utmost
ion in the poets, to make the sense corres-
to the sound; to which they were in some
e led, by the poetry being designed to be set
sic. In the Ode to the Passions by Collins,
ste and judgment have prevented him from
g into such an excess on this point, as would
y, or at least impair very much, the other
ies of the poem, which are essential to the
ction of pleasure. He is deserving the more
, as his ode was designed for music,* and as
xcess to which some writers had pushed this
l beauty, had not been sufficiently censured.
admirably the taste of Gray is shewn, in ad-

t is not unentertaining to compare the description of
itative powers of the different musical instruments,
poems of Collins and Pope, as well as the numbers
ponding to the different passions of the mind.
is great beauty, I think, in the former poet's giving
me instrument, "the horn," to the opposite passions

justing the harmony of his verse to the subject which he describes, I may be permitted briefly to point out to the observation of his readers. The third stanza in the 'Progress of Poetry,' descriptive of quick and joyous, and then slow and dignified motion, and the change of numbers and of sentiment in the last stanza, may be mentioned as fit instances to corroborate this assertion: indeed, I think, with respect to the exquisite harmony of its movements, this poem is formed upon more delicate principles, and with more curious attention, than 'The Bard.'

The verse which is used in all English poetry, is formed either of what is called *even cadence*,* that is, when the acute accent falls regularly on the

of Melancholy and Cheerfulness, and describing the different *tones* which each could draw out of it, expressive of her feelings:

"With eyes uprais'd, as one inspir'd,
Pale Melancholy sate retir'd,
And from her wild, sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pour'd through the *mellow horn, her pensive soul!*
. . . . . .
But, O! how alter'd was its *sprightlier tone!*
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulders flung,
Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
Blew an *inspiring air*, that dale and thicket rung," &c.
. . . . . .

* See some excellent observations on this subject, in the 'Harmony of Languages,' by Wm. Mitford, Esq. 2d edit. 8vo. p. 72. 119.

md syllable of the foot, as in the common heroic
',

"As sickly plánts betráy a níggard eárth:"

when for the sake of variety and emphasis it is
nsferred to the first syllable of the foot, as

>réad the young thóught, and wárm the ópening heart."

verse may be formed in *triple cadence*,† when
acute accent is placed on the third syllable in-
id of the second, as

"At the clóse of the dáy, when the hámlet is still."

this verse the accent cannot be varied or trans-
ed, as in verses of *even* cadence, though the
t syllable of the first foot may be omitted, as

"And mórtals the swéets of forgétfulness próve."

e march or movement of these two measures is
extremely dissimilar, that they cannot, except
a few cases, with any grace or beauty, be
ned together. Notwithstanding this, the great
iety afforded by the mixture of them in the
ne poem, has been a strong inducement to some
ets to use them; who wanted more forcibly to
press the imitation of sounds; and who could

† There is a *triple cadence* exactly opposite to this, when
acute accent falls on the first syllable, as in

"Mérrily, mérrily shall we live, now
U'nder the blóssom that hángs on the bough."

not resist so tempting a mode of effecting their purpose. By these means they expected to have the command of all movements, slow and solemn, or quick and hurrying, more completely than by confining themselves to verses of one and the same cadence. In none of the lyrical poetry of Gray is this *triple cadence* used at all; nor has he wished to push the imitative harmony of his numbers further, than the regular *even cadence*, with its proper variation, would allow. In the third stanza of the 'Progress of Poetry,' where the change is made from quick to slow measure; it is effected by a change of accent, (throwing the acute accent on the first syllable,) but never by a change of cadence:

"Thée | the vóice | the dánce | obéy,
Tém|per'd to | thy wárb|led láy,
O'ér | Idá|lia's vél|vet gréen."

These three lines belong to the four-footed verse, with the omission of the first syllable of the first foot; and are the same as the first line in The Bard:

"Rú|in séize | thee, rúth|less kíng. | "

The next verse in the stanza is the entire four-footed, and the verse following that, the three-footed;

"The ró|sy crów|ned Lóves | are séen |
On Cý|theré|a's dáy. | "

The more equal movement of these two latter lines

forms a strong contrast with another change of measure, now going to take place, more brisk than the first three lines, in which the supernumerary or hypercatalectic syllable is found; and in which six lines there are three varieties of measure, the truncated five-footed verse, the truncated four-footed verse, and the four-footed verse complete:

" With an|tic Sport | and blue-|eyed Plea|sures,
Frisking | light in | frolic | measures;
Now pur|suing, | now re|treating, |
Now | in circ|ling troops | they meet. |
To brisk | notes in | cadence beating, |
Glance | their ma|ny twin|kling feet. | "

This quick and hurrying movement is now suddenly changed to a slow and dignified motion; the verse is the five-footed, or heroic, with alternate rhyme, like the Elegy in a Country Churchyard; and the syllables abounding with long quantities.

" Slow melting strains their queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay;
With arms sublime that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way."

And the whole stanza is concluded with the full and stately march of the Alexandrine line:

" O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young desire, and purple light of love."

How exquisitely beautiful the harmony of this stanza is; and how finely it has succeeded in its imitative powers, will be felt by all. If we now

turn to the Ode to St. Cecilia by Pope, we shall find that his peculiar and express purpose was, to shew how well he could display the imitative powers of his language. To effect this, he has changed the *cadence* of his verse backwards and forwards, as best suited his design.* One cannot but acknowledge the disagreeable effect of this change, and indeed, the total failure of the imitation.

"In a sadly pleasing strain,
Let the warbling lute complain,
Let the lóud | trumpet soúnd, |
Till the róofs all aroúnd |
The shrill éc|hos rebóund, |
While in more lengthen'd notes, and slow,
The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow.
Hark, the numbers soft and clear,
Gently steal upon the ear,
Now louder, and now louder rise,
And fill with spreading sounds the skies;
Exúl|ting in trí|umph now swéll | the bold nótes, |
In bró|ken air trém|bling the wíld | music flóats | ."

I have chosen this stanza in preference to others, because the poetical language of it is unexceptionable, and the disagreeable effect can only be attributed to the numbers. In the whole stanza, "He sang, and hell consented," it is difficult to say whether the flow of the numbers, or the choice of

* See Stepney's Poem "On the University of Cambridge burning the Duke of Monmouth's Picture:" where is a similar change of cadence. Spence remarks this to be an instance of Pope's successful skill in the Ode mentioned above. See his remarks on Pope's Odyssey, p. 137-178.

the expression, is the most injudicious. Dryden, though not in so great a degree, has fallen into the same error, in his ode on the same subject.* That which led both poets to make use of this unpleasant mixture of cadences, was the desire of imitating forcibly the expression of sounds and motions; on which subject I shall take the liberty of offering a few remarks. The radical error in the design, has produced the failure in the execution; the order and arrangement of harmony is lost, and the symmetry and proportion of the poem is disfigured. Collins, like Gray, has preserved himself entirely free from this faulty versification.

The lyrical poems of Gray consist in general of the mixture of the heroic, or five-footed verse, with that of four feet; and this latter is either perfect, or else variety is produced by dropping the first syllable of the first foot. If we add to them the six-footed, or Alexandrine line, at the end of the stanza, we shall possess all the variety of measure of which 'The Progress of Poetry' is composed. Its *metrical* beauty it owes to those measures, with a distribution of the acute accent, according to circumstances, and an attentive change of the quantity of the syllables. Another measure, and rather a singular one, is found in the epodes of The Bard:

* See also his Ode to Apollo, in Œdipus. A strong instance may be found in one of those feeble poems, which dropt from the aged hand of Young, Vol. vi. p. 91.

"No more I weep,
They do not sleep,

I see them sit,
They linger yet."

This is a very unusual metre in odes of a serious kind; though it is not without authority.* Except in this one variation, the verse of The Bard is of the same kind as that of The Progress of Poetry and The Installation Ode; the latter of which is the only irregular ode ever written by Gray.†

* See Sherborne's Transl. of Seneca's Troades, p. 17, Chorus:

"And 'mongst the pious ghosts makes quest,
For Hector, happy Priam! blest.
No less is he, whoe'er he be,
Who falling in War's bloody strife,
Sees all things perish with his life."

See Dryden's Horace, Ode xxix. b. 3.

"The Sun is in the Lion mounted high,
The Syrian Star basks from afar,
And with his sultry breath infects the sky."

See Warton's H. of E. Poetry, vol. iii. p. 78, for an earlier specimen.

† It is well known that Dryden's Ode to St. Cecilia was finely set to music by Handel; and Mr. Mason says, "Mr. Smith, a worthy pupil of Handel, intended to have set Mr. Gray's ode, 'The Bard,' to music; and Mr. Gray, whose musical feelings were exquisite, with a knowledge of the art, gave him an idea for the overture, which seemed equally proper and striking." Pope knew nothing of music; and asked Dr. Arbuthnot, whether Handel really deserved the applause he met with.

The same critic whom I lately had occasion to mention, says, "that in reviewing the examples he had given, it appeared, contrary to expectation, that in passing from the *strongest* resemblances, to those that are *fainter*, every step affords additional pleasure. Renewing the experiment again and again, he says, I feel no wavering, but the greatest pleasure constantly from the *faintest* resemblances; and yet how can this be? for if the pleasure lie in the *imitation*, must not the *strongest* resemblances afford the greatest pleasure? From this vexing dilemma, I am happily relieved by reflecting on a doctrine established in the chapter of Resemblance and Contrast, that the pleasure of resemblance is the greatest when it is least expected, and when the objects compared are in their capital circumstances widely different."* It appears to me that Lord Kames's observation on the different effects produced by the stronger and fainter resemblances of the sound to the image is correct; but I think that the cause

* See Lord Kames's Elements of Criticism, vol. ii. p. 92. The observations by Lord Kames, *on the pleasure of resemblance*, are rather generally and loosely laid down. The truth is, that which *imitates*, may agree too closely with, or differ too widely from the object of imitation, to produce the proper degree of pleasure. A painted statue, would resemble real life too closely, and therefore be liable to the first objection. "Nimius in veritate, et similitudinis, quam pulchritudinis amantior." On the other hand, the produce of the needle, and the loom, and also what is called

of the inferior pleasure he received in reading such lines as the following, which he quotes from Pope's Homer, Od. xi. 736, is to be attributed to another source:

'With many a weary step, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone.'

And,

"When the tide rushes from her trembling caves,
The rough rock roars, tumultuous boil the waves."*

Topiary-work in gardens, is subject to the latter: as the coarseness of their materials cannot by any art be brought to a sufficient nicety for the purpose of imitation: Painting, or colours spread on a flat surface, seem to occupy the place between the two extremes.

* In a letter from A. Hill to Pope, May 11, 1738, vol. i. p. 248-266, he mentions his design of writing a Treatise —on Propriety in the Thought and Expression of Poetry, with a limitation to three distinct requisites—Adaption, Simplicity, and Closeness. In noticing a want, common even in good writers, of appropriating their words to their distinct and particular tendency; in mentioning this inaccuracy of language, "This loose *Surtout* dress now in fashion," he quotes Pope's lines,

"Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows," &c.

as the chief point here in view, was the structure or sound of your verse, with purpose to make it, in your own fine expression, *an Echo to the Sense*, the minutest exactnes of choice in the words seems to have been of double d and necessity." He then gives his own rifacciamen

Soft breathes the whisp'ring verse—if Zephyr plays,
Runs the stream smooth?—still smoother glides the lays.
When high-swoln surges sweep the sounding shore,
Roll the rough verse, hoarse, like the Torrent's roar,

In these, and lines similar to these,* I should observe, that the design of producing a direct imitation of sound or motion, which is beyond the power of language to perfect, has betrayed the poet into such a structure of verse, as (if not contrary to that which is common, and which the ear has by habit associated with certain metrical rules) is at least strange and unusual; forming a strong and disagreeable contrast to the general harmony of the poem; and instead of being subservient to the melody, and the regular and pleasurable flow of the metre, has in a great measure tended to destroy them. The partial success of the imitation† is too

When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too lab'ring, each dragg'd word moves slow.
Lovelier the light Camilla skims the plain,
Shoots o'er th' unbending corn, nor shakes th' unconscious grain."—

This he calls "a verbal exactness of Propriety," by which mountains not only stand out to the *Eye*, but are felt, and, as it were, walked over by the fancy.

* See Cowley's Note on Davideis, Book I.

† Du Bos, in his Reflexions sur la Poësie, vol. i. c. xi. and xxxv. says, that it is difficult in *French* verses to imitate the sound which the sense describes, to any great degree; the language not being copious in its *mimetic* powers compared with the Latin and other languages. Accordingly he has found this imitation much more practised by the Italian poets, whose copious and sonorous language easily admits it. Instances of it, however, are easily found in the French poets, particularly in the older writers. Dr. Beattie gives an instance from Ronsard: see his Essay on Poetry and Music, p. 571.

broadly and plainly obtruded on our notice; and does not endeavour to conceal its art,* but to display its dexterity. That pleasure, which must exist with all other; the gentle and equal emotion arising from the structure of the verse and return of the rhyme; ought to reduce all the stronger features, to harmonize the bold and passionate descriptions, and to beget a temperance even in the very torrent of passion. In fact, the poet, by an error not at all unusual in the arts, has made a partial and very subservient beauty usurp the place of the primary and leading laws in the structure of versification. This cause being overlooked by the critic, is the more remarkable, as he has not been unaware of its power; having mentioned it on another occasion, though not exactly as I have now applied it. The following well-known passage in The Fleece of Dyer, is in many respects beautiful, and conceived in the true spirit of poetry, for which reason I have selected it in preference to other, and more striking examples. Perhaps the poet has attempted to paint his image with too bold a relief, to force it too distinctly on the mind of the reader; and by his anxiety, that not the minutest touch should escape the eye, he has sacrificed some of the pleasurable emotion, arising from the melody of his versification:

* "Ubicunque ars ostentatur, *Veritas* abesse videtur," Quinctil. Inst. Orat. x. 3. "Desinit *Ars* esse, si appareat," Id. iv. 2.

"——With easy course
The vessels glide, unless their speed be stopped
By dead calms, that oft lie on those smooth seas,
While every zephyr sleeps; then the shrouds drop;
The downy feather on the cordage hung,
Moves not; the flat sea shines like yellow gold
Fused in the fire; or like the marble floor
Of some old temple wide; but where so wide
In old, or later time, its marble floor
Did ever temple boast as this, which here
Spreads its bright level many a league around." iv. v. 250.

"Great reserve, (says Adam Smith,*) great discretion, and a very nice discernment, are requisite in order to introduce such imperfect imitations either into poetry or music. When repeated too often, when continued too long, they appear to be, what they really are, mere trifles, in which a very inferior artist, if he will only give himself the trouble to attend to them, can easily equal the greatest. I have seen a Latin translation of Mr. Pope's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, which in this respect very much excelled the original. Both in one art and the other, the difficulty is not in making them as well as they are capable of being made, but in knowing when and how far to make them at all." The same observation which has been made on poetry, certainly seems to hold good when applied to the sister-art of music.†—"Of all the

* See his Discourse on the Imitative Arts, p. 167, 4to.

† "Handel seldom fails to *ascend* with the word *rise*, and *descend* with the word *fall*. Purcell goes still further, and

powers of music, (says Mr Twining,†) this of raising ideas by *direct resemblance*, is confessed to be the weakest and least important. It is indeed so far from being essential to the pleasure of the art, that, unless used with great caution, judgment, and delicacy, it will destroy that pleasure, by becoming to every competent judgment offensive and ridiculous."‡ The truth is, in every art there are primary and leading laws on which it is founded, and which must not give way to partial beauties. All arts have, of necessity, those prin-

accompanies every idea of *roundness* with an endless *rotation* of notes: But what shall we say to that musician, who disgraces the poet by realising his metaphors, and in downright earnest makes the fields laugh and the valleys sing. In music, it is better to have no ideas at all, than to have false ones; and it will be safer to trust to the simple effect of impression, than to the idle conceits of a fond imitation," Webb on Poetry and Music, p. 143. See T. Moore's Prefatory Letter on Music in Irish Melodies, p. 227, Rousseau Mélanges, vol. v. p. 222, and Goethe Hommes Celebres de France, p. 285.

† See Twining's Translation of Aristotle, p. 45. And Beattie's Essay on Poetry, p. 445, 4to. The abuse of this kind of imitation in music, is excellently ridiculed by Swift in his advice to Dr. Ecclin, to compose a Cantata for the purpose. See the passage at length, in Beattie's Essay.

‡ In respect to a comparison between poetry and music, as *imitative arts*, it appears that music has the power of imitation in a closer degree than poetry, in a few instances; but poetry far exceeds music in its power of imitating generally, and in its variety and number. See Harris's Dialogues on Music, Poetry, and Painting, chap. iii. p. 74. When it is said that poetry and music imitate motions as

ciples of their own, that distinguish them from the subject of their imitation. But in their infancy, or before these principles are thoroughly settled and known, men are guided not by the certain rules of their own art, but by some fancied reference to a more distant criterion. Hence in our old poets, and in the early poetry of all nations, we find much of this attempt at direct imitation. A similar fault existed in the older schools of painting;* namely, the attempt at close and direct imitation, or deception, by giving great *relief* to

well as sounds, it is evident that they can only imitate *motion*, by representing the *sounds*, which accompany it. They can imitate not only the slowness, and quickness of motions, in this way, but, as Dr. Campbell observes, vibration, intermission, and inequality. See The Philosophy of Rhetoric, vol. ii. p. 209.

* In the description of certain pictures in Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew, act. i. sc. 4, we see that the description rests entirely upon the *direct* and *close imitation*, which always pleases those not conversant in its principles and practice. In the apprehension of the ignorant, the painting which imitates, or rather copies, nature, so as to become a *deception*, possesses that quality which to them appears the summit of the art; and therefore this striking feature in the pictures is, with the finest propriety, brought into prominent notice in this place.

Second Man. Dost thou love pictures? We will fetch thee strait
Adonis painted by a running brook,
And Cytherea all in sedges hid,
Which seem to move and wanton with her breath,
E'en as the waving sedges play with wind.
Lord. We'll show thee Io, as she was a maid,

the picture, to make it resemble life; and thus some portraits of the older masters are distinguished, not for expression of character, nor for any successful practice of the difficult and higher branches of the art; but for the persevering faithfulness and exactness with which they have transferred the images of nature to their canvass; a point to which they gave their undivided attention; and which has procured for their productions an accidental value, as historical portraits. An experiment similar to this in painting, and proceeding from the same principles, was made in the art of statuary among the ancients; by forming the eyes of their statues of glass, or metal, so as more nearly to resemble life; the hair also was sometimes coloured; and even the lips composed of metallic plates, in order to give them additional splendour. "Ad veritatem (says Quinctilian) Lysippum et Praxitelem accessisse optimo affirmant. Nam Demetrius tanquam nimius in eâ reprehenditur; et fuit *similitudinis*, quam pulchritudinis amantior," Instit. Orat. xii. c. 10. It was, however, necessarily discovered, that all imitative arts are more or less imperfect,

And how she was beguiled, and surprised,
As lively painted as the deed was done.
Third Man. Or Daphne roaming thro' a thorny wood,
Scratching her legs, *that one shall swear she bleeds;*
And at the sight shall sad Apollo weep,
So workmanly the blood and tears are drawn."

See Gerard on Taste, p. 55.

l confined in their powers; that they cannot, nor s it desirable that they should, *copy* nature with ıctness, but are designed to give only a partial *:tation;* and that they must have principles of ir own, adapted to their several powers, by which y are to be judged. Hence it appeared in nting, that this quality of *relief*, which produced close imitation, opposed itself directly to one of ıuch higher nature, that of *fullness of effect*;* l in poetry, as I have said before, if carried to :ess, it acts in the same manner precisely, by)osing the general harmony of the metre. "Adeo illis (says the critic I just quoted) quoque est ıua vitiosa imitatio, quorum ars omnis constat tatione." We are to recollect,† that an *imi-ive* is not a *deceptive* art;‡ and if this is not

See Sir Joshua Reynolds's Discourses on Painting, . i. p. 276, ed. Malone; and Gibbon's Roman Empire, . v. p. 95.

"The proper pleasure (says A. Smith) which we derive n painting and sculpture, (these two imitative arts,) so from being the effect of *deception*, is altogether *incompa-* with it. That pleasure is founded altogether upon wonder, at seeing an object of one kind represent so l an object of a very different kind, and upon our admi-on of the art which surmounts so happily that disparity ich Nature has established between them." Essays on Imitative Arts, p. 145.

The effect of *deception* is to weary and disgust us; t of *imitation*, to delight us more and more. No one

permitted in sculpture, painting, and music, it surely cannot be in poetry, whose medium of imitation is so confined, always more remote than the two former, often more than the latter, and which, like music, can only be called an imitative art, in a sense different from that which we apply to painting and to sculpture.

I shall conclude this branch of the subject with a quotation from the Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds, which appears to me to be written with the usual sagacity and good sense of that author: "Poetry addresses itself to the same faculties, and the same dispositions, as painting, though by different means. The object of both is, to accommodate itself to all the natural propensities and inclinations of the human mind. The very existence of poetry depends on the license it assumes of *deviating from*

would, I should think, attempt to *compare* a fine picture in a room, with a beautiful landscape from the windows: or bring together, the strong and bold relief of Nature; its massive projections, and its deep recesses; with the flat and feeble perspective of Painting. Hence, I should object to that union of *natural* and *artificial* landscape, in the famous room at Norbury House; and in the villa of Monte Dragone, near Rome, painted by G. Poussin. Mr. Gilpin has not objected to this room; though in a few pages after he has described it,—in mentioning a statue from Otaheite, with real hair,—he says, "The mixture of *reality* and *imitation* is indeed very disgusting." See his Observations on the West of England, p. 24. Some statues dug up of late years at Pompeii were painted. See Steevens' note to Winter's Night's Tale, Act v. Scene 2.

ual nature, in order to gratify natural propen-
es by other means, which are found by experi-
e full as capable of affording such gratification.
sets out with a language in the highest degree
ificial, a construction of measured words, such
never is, nor was used by man. Let this mea-
e be what it may, whether hexameter or any
er metre used in Latin and Greek, or rhyme, or
nk, varied with pauses and accents in modern
guages; they are equally removed from nature,
l equally a violation of common speech. When
s artificial mode has been established as the ve-
le of sentiment, there is another principle of the
man mind to which the work must be referred,
ich still renders it more artificial, carries it still
ther from common nature, and deviates only to
der it more perfect. That principle is the sense
congruity, coherence, and consistency, which
a real existing principle in man, and it must be
tified. Therefore having once adopted a style
l a measure not found in common discourse, it
equired that the sentiments also should be in the
ne proportion elevated above common nature,
m the necessity of there being an agreement of
parts among themselves, that one uniform
ole may be produced."

III. From the consideration of the harmony of
mbers, we naturally pass to the language used
Gray in his poems, or, as it is commonly called,

his poetical diction. He says, in a letter to West,* "As to matter of style, I have this to say, The language of the age is never the language of poetry,† except among the French, whose verse, when the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose.‡ Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself, to which almost every one that has written has added something, by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivations, nay sometimes words of their own composition and invention. Shakespeare and Milton have been great creators in this way; and none more licentious than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrow expressions from the former." "Our language, (he also writes,) not being a settled thing, like the French, has an undoubted right to words of an hundred years old, provided antiquity has not rendered them unintelligible. In truth, Shake-

* See Mason's Memoirs of Gray, vol. iii. p. 28.

† So Quinctilian: "Ut *quotidiani* et semper eodem modo formati sermonis fastidium levet, et nos a *vulgari* dicendi genere defendat," Lib. ix. c. 3, 3. And thus Aristotle, opposing the opinion of the critic Ariphrades, on some forms of expression used by the tragic poets: Διὰ γὰρ τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἐν τοῖς κυρίοις, ποιεῖ τὸ μὴ ἰδιωτικὸν ἐν τῇ λέξει ἅπαντα τὰ τοιαῦτα. Ἐκεῖνος δὲ τοῦτο ἠγνόει. Cap. κβ.

‡ Cerceau, in his Réflexions sur la Poësie Françoise, attributes such power to *inversion* of language, as to make it the characteristic of French versification, and the *single* circumstance which in their language divides verse from prose.

speare's language is one of his principal beauties, and he has no less advantage over Addison's and Rowe's in this respect, than in those other great excellencies you mention; every word in him is a picture."

This opinion of Gray may be considered, in some degree at least, I should suppose, as the rule of his compositions; with the formation of which, indeed, it seems to coincide; with this sole distinction, that many of the idioms and expressions in his poetry, instead of reminding us of the language of the older English poets, seem to be drawn from foreign as well as native sources, from the Greek and Latin, as well as modern writers. There are passages in almost every stanza of Gray, which bring into our minds by association, some beautiful turn of expression, some bolder or some more graceful thought, some judicious introduction of foreign and metaphorical language, from the admired writers of Greece or Rome. By these means, the genius of the poet, instead of leading, seems only to accompany us into the regions of his beautiful creation; while the activity of our imagination multiplies into a thousand forms the solitary image it has received; and the memory, gathering up the most distant associations, surrounds the poet with a lustre not his own.

This elevated style seems peculiarly adapted to express the sublimity, force, and grandeur which characterize lyrical poetry; and Gray has suited

the quality of the style with admirable taste to the subject of the poem. In no instance does it appear, that any expression or word which he has selected from English authority, or which he has borrowed analogically from the ancient writers, is obscure from disuse, or on account of the remote source from which it came. Nor indeed does his language ever suggest to the reader, that the thought was introduced for the sake of the expression,* or that the subject was subservient to the language; but as his feeling was correct, and his fancy elevated, so his language, as I before observed, was forcible, and his words elegant. And it is also not unworthy of observation, that though the expressions of Gray are elaborate and adorned, the feeling of the poet is not weakened or obscured, but seen distinctly through the medium of his language; so that even those readers, who would have been repelled by the learned air of his expression, as very many have been by that of Milton, are yet attracted by the striking sublimity of the subject, and still more by the peculiar pathos that softens his compositions, and brings them closer to the common feelings of mankind. There is indeed great richness and splendour in his ornaments; but, in the words of the Roman critic,†

* " ——That for a tricksie word
Defy the matter."
Merchant of Venice, Act iii. Sc. 6.

† Quinctiliani Inst. Orator. viii. 3, 7. ed. Gesner, 4to.

"Ornatus et virilis, et fortis, et sanctus est; nec effeminatam levitatem, et fuco eminentem colorem amat, sanguine et viribus nitet."

Gray derives a very great advantage from the sources of his style being widely spread; whence there is no appearance of his having formed his manner from any one writer, or any particular school of composition. This appears to me to be also the praise of Shakespeare, whose language, founded upon large and collective observation, is not to be imitated like that of Spenser or Milton; as it is free from the frequent peculiarities in which they abound, and which are easily and anxiously caught by those who do not in the least participate in the genius of their model. In the choice of his words and phrases, Shakespeare appears to be in the least possible degree a mannerist. His thoughts, indeed, were often copied by the dramatic writers who lived in his days, and who enriched their poems with many a splendid fragment taken from his works. But his language was less easily to be imitated: it was the natural result of his taste and genius, entirely unfettered by the destructive rules of system.

The language of Gray, however, has not escaped without much reprehension. It has been thought too much laboured, too generally elevated, and too highly adorned. On first hearing this objection, it appears that it does not act peculiarly against our poet, but might with not unequal force be

urged against a whole class of writers; against Milton, perhaps Spenser, and in later times against Akenside and Collins, and Mason and T. Warton, and many other poets, who have selected the beautiful expressions and forcible language of older times, and have united them by a judicious disposition into an ornamented style of their own. In poetry as well as prose, there are various styles, each of its own peculiar merit, fitted to the genius of him who invented, adopted, or improved it; and it also must be remarked, that one species of poetry demands a style wholly different from another;—that Gray's *lyrical* style, if ornamented, is not to be censured, because Goldsmith's *descriptive* style is plain; that the Epic, the Dramatic Poem, the Elegy, the Epistle, and the Ode, are formed in models widely differing from each other: "On ne songe pas, (says M. de la Motte, in the very sensible preface to his Fables,) qu'il y a plusieurs graces, qui, sans se ressembler, peuvent se remplacer les unes les autres, et faire un plaisir, égal, quoiqu'il ne soit pas le même." This objection certainly has a tendency to establish a rule, that poetry possesses but one *generic* style or manner adapted to it; and that all other styles are more or less erroneous, in proportion as they depart from this imaginary standard of excellence.*

In Gray, as it is evident that the most exquisite

* See Todd's Ed. of Milton, vol. v. p. 415, ed. 1st.

attention has been paid to the harmony of his numbers and the cadence of his verse, so his language also is generally elevated above that style of which the greater part of poetry consists: or, in other words, it is raised to that point, which is the level of the finer and more elaborate parts of most poems. Upon this ground, I think, the objection is founded. To which I should observe, that such a species of composition, in my opinion at least, is in no wise misplaced, but, on the other hand, is productive of the greatest beauty in that species of poetry, to which the chief part of Gray's productions is confined; namely, the Ode. In compositions where *action* is carried on, there is something to assist the language, to supply its defects, and conceal its weakness, by an interest of its own. But lyrical poetry is conversant more generally with sentiment and description than action: it does not appeal to the passions, but is adorned with the display of the imagination. In another point of view also, in poems of greater length, the variation of the subject demands a difference of style; in epic and dramatic compositions, some parts must be subservient; in poems of great length, as it is said in great compositions in painting, considerable part *must* be common and ordinary.* Many parts *may* be of little conse-

* This is agreeable to the opinion of D'Alembert, in his Réflexions sur la Poësie. "En effet, un long ouvrage

quence; and there may be qualities in the various branches of those compositions, hostile to embellishment. Pope, in a letter to Mr. Walsh, says, "to bestow heightening on every part, is monstrous. Some parts ought to be lower than the rest: and nothing looks more ridiculous than a work, where the thoughts, however different in their own nature, seem all on a level." Aristotle recommends the poet to reserve for those parts of the poem that display no action (ἐν τοῖς ἀργοῖς μέρεσι), the most elaborate and adorned language, knowing that in these parts, the beauty of the language must supply that interest that cannot be borrowed from the action.—To conclude this branch of the subject; as I observed, that the style or diction of Gray's poems derived an excellence from its being formed upon wide observation, and from various sources; so I should think the diction of his contemporary Warton liable to censure; insomuch, as he has selected his words, his descriptions, his epithets, and the general character of

doit ressembler, proportion gardée, à une longue conversation, qui, pour être agréable sans être fatigante, ne doit être vive et animée, que par intervalles. Ou dans un sujet noble, les vers cessent d'être agréables, dès qu'ils sont négligés; et d'un autre côté le plaisir s'émousse par la continuité même." See also some sensible reflections on this subject in the xviiith Lecture, of Dr. Priestley's Lectures on Oratory and Criticism. And Beattie's Essay on Poetry, p. 560, 4to, and Dr. Young on Lyric Poetry, vol. vi. p. 161.

his style, from the pages of a few authors, from Spenser, Milton, and the less eminent poets, Drayton and Browne, with some others:

"—— Hosce secutus
Mutatis tantum numeris:—"

a practice, which has, in my opinion at least, detracted very materially from the flow and ease of his writing, which has given to many of his poems an appearance of intended imitation, of being formed upon some particular and confined system; instead of the genius of the poet appearing to command, arrange, and adorn all the assistance which he thought it necessary to procure. That poetry is most excellent, where the character of the poet appears with strong and visible features, through the design of the poem. The poetry of Warton does not appear to me to give us any insight into the character of the man. It is the artist alone, that is visible.* I should almost think it necessary to make some apology for the observations which I have afforded on the poetry of T. Warton, were I not confident that they proceed from the most attentive, and, as far as I am aware, the most impartial consideration of his works: nor is it to be

* I must remark, in this place, that the observations which I have presumed to make on the poetry of Warton, do not apply to *all* his poetry. Some of his Sonnets and Odes are written with real feeling, and true poetic character. At the same time I should not be inclined to rank 'The Suicide' among the happier productions of his fancy.

forgotten that his great merits in other branches of the poetic art, may amply compensate for his deficiency in this. I certainly think that the system upon which he formed his phraseology was wrong: that it is not the language of nature; or of art that constantly keeps nature in view: that it is rather the production of a confined and artificial taste; and that it is not language that can be relished and enjoyed by the generality of readers; I mean of those who know and feel what true poetry is. If not, to what other criterion is it to be referred? Addison tells us, "that poetry, like all the other fine arts, is to deduce its laws from the general sense and taste of mankind." The poet indeed, and those educated in the same habits of thought, may gaze with delight on the forms of his own partial creation; but they cannot be expected to produce any effect upon the taste or feeling of society: "utendum (says the Roman critic) plane nummo cui publica forma est."*

The compositions of all good writers have, of necessity, that difference which arises from the peculiar habits of association formed by them: and in the degree in which those habits unite with or differ from those of the world in general, arises the popularity or neglect of the poet. He who has formed his associations from a narrow system, and from a confined and partial acquaintance with general nature, must expect that his admirers will

* See Quinctiliani Instit. Lib. i. c. 6.

naturally be but few. As the works of the ancients, the writers of Greece and Rome, are almost universally read, are familiar to us from early age, have received the approving sanction of time, and are inferior only to the great book of Nature itself; whoever borrows from them, takes from a source with which his readers are acquainted perhaps equally with himself; where every image will bring some pleasing association, and every allusion call up a train of awakened recollections. How great then must the difference be, when we are reading the works of him whose phraseology is brought from the comparatively confined school of English poetry! To some it may be absolutely strange, and repulsive in a greater degree than the works of the old writers themselves, and that for an obvious reason: by many others, it will be read, separated from the general mass of their knowledge, and unadorned by all the charms that the mind of the reader adds to the expression of the writer. The attention will be dissipated, and drawn from the subject to the style; a language will be presented, in which we have never been accustomed to think and reflect, and which can never repay what it loses in not being a general vehicle of thought, by appearing to be the fruit of curious and speculative attention. "Every composition (as Mr. Alison* observes) may be consi-

* See Alison's Essay on the Nature and Principles of Taste. Ed. 4to. p. 339.

dered faulty or defective, in which the expression of the art is more striking than the expression of the subject." Moreover, this style separates, as it were, by an artificial contrivance, the connexion of the thought and the language; when, instead of being produced together, and joined by the long-established habits of the mind in the finest and most inseparable connexions, the former seems to wait after its birth, till it is modelled and dressed by the fancy of the poet, in the garb which he most admires. To this fault in his phraseology the same writer adds another, proceeding from the same cause; namely, the bent of his mind towards a certain species of *imagery* and *subject-matter*, which, however excellent in itself, is confessedly injurious to his poetry, by too constant a repetition. Shakespeare * is more popular than other poets, because his thoughts are more general; expanding upon a wider theatre, connected with more

* I made some remarks before on the language of Shakespeare. Cowper, in his letters, (vol. i. let. cxxix.) observes, "that Milton had taken a long stride forward, left the language of his own day far behind him, and anticipated the expressions of a century yet to come."—Certain it is, that the style of Milton's poetry is much more easy and graceful, and has a far less antiquated appearance, than that of his prose-writings. Spenser, on the other hand, used an antiquated language by choice. Sir William Davenant, in the preface to Gondibert, p. 6, remarks, that "our language did receive from his hand new grafts of old withered words."

popular feelings, united with more common impressions, and formed upon more extensive observation.

With regard to the diction of the tragedy of Agrippina,* as I think that, in lyrical poetry,

And Daniel alludes to Spenser in almost the same words, in the sonnet, which begins,

> " Let others sing of knights and palladines,
> In antique phrases, and old wither'd words;
> Paint shadows, in imaginary lines, &c."

His language, notwithstanding what some critics say, is, I think, assuredly more ancient than that of Drayton, Daniel, or the Fletchers. How much it differed from the current language of that time, may be seen by comparing it with Shakespeare. From the works of the *dramatic* writers, we may best judge of the poetical language of their days. The nature of their compositions would not receive an antiquated or obsolete diction, lest they should offend against the golden rule,

> " Populo ut placerent, quas fecisset fabulas."

A play, whose language was obselete, or affected, would be pardoned by neither pit, gallery, nor boxes—" Non *Homines*, non *Di*, non concessere *Columnæ*." Horace says, " *Lectori* credere mallem, quam *Spectatoris* fastigia ferre superbi." On Spenser's Diction, see Ellis' Specimens, vol. ii. p. 160. Winstanley's Lives, p. 89. Warton's Pope, vol. iv. p. 160. 'Spenser himself affects the obsolete.' Johnson's Rambler, No. 121. Drake's Shakespeare, vol. i. p. 647, who *recants* the opinion in his Liter. Hours, ii. 161. Singer's Pref. to Hall's Satires, p. vi. xxii. ci.

* In the Heroic verse of tragedy, the supernumerary, or

Gray used the language and style most agreeable to the nature of it; so in his fragment of his tragedy, the manner of his composition, with some little exception, seems suited to the nature of his drama. He has at least avoided, and this is no common praise, mixing the more familiar and less elevated dramatic style, with the bolder language, the more elaborate description, and the greater variety, of the epic fable. He knew that the tone of tragedy was lower, and nearer to common life, as the power of its deception was less perfect, than that of the epic poem: as it affects through the medium of living action: and as the impropriety of that language would immediately be felt, which removed itself as far as it could, from that which it designed to represent. Aristotle† remarked, that the sentiments and manners were obscured by too splendid a diction, ἀποκρύπτει γὰρ πάλιν ἡ λίαν λάμπρα λέξις, τὰ ἤθη, καὶ τὰς διανοίας. Accordingly, when a dramatic composition is highly adorned with luxuriance of language and pomp of

hypercatalectic syllable, in general denied to the Epic poem, is used, in order to reduce the elevated style nearer to the tone of common life; to give it ease and familiarity, "propter similitudinem sermonis." When this syllable is used, our heroic verse is then the same as that used by the Italians, the five-footed, with the additional syllable. Shenstone remarks the melancholy and tender flow occasioned by this syllable in the plays of Otway: see his Essays, p. 233.

† See Aristot. Poetic. cap. κδ'. p. 95, ed. Cooke.

sentiment, as the Comus of Milton; we should pronounce it, as it more and more recedes from the appearance of copying natural life, rather adapted to the closet * than to the stage; by which is only meant, that though it does not possess those qualities of interesting action, and a lively representation of the manners and character, which by nature are adapted to please all minds; yet it still possesses merits in language, sentiment, plot, or other parts of the drama, which can be relished by the instructed and enlightened reader. It loses indeed its original character; but by the genius of the poet it is enabled to assume another, which, to a certain extent, will produce pleasure of a different kind. The very short period allowed for the dramatic fable, in comparison with the duration of the epic poem, is also another reason why there is less room for ornament. To restrain, however, the overflowings of the imagination, and to keep the thoughts and language subdued, and subservient to the action of the drama, has always been one of the difficult parts of the poet's task. It certainly has not been sufficiently observed by many of our dramatic writers, by Congreve in the Mourning Bride, by Rowe, and particularly by

* That which we call a closet-play, addresses itself to the imagination and passions only: a play which is represented, both to the eye and the imagination: an opera, to the ear and eye: and little, or not at all, to the imagination.

Dryden.* In this tragedy of Agrippina, there is great compactness in the versification, and sufficient ornament in the language. But the cadence of the numbers is, I think, peculiar; the expression has a laboured appearance, and the character of the whole has not that *native air*, the absence of which, in the dramatic fable, hardly any excellence can supply. The eye of the poet was perhaps too constantly fixed upon the unbending and declamatory style of the French drama, which has prevented the superior beauty, the language of

* It is just to Dryden to mention a passage which he has written in defence of himself in the parallel between poetry and painting, prefixed to his translation of Du Fresnoy. "The faults (he says) of that drama, The Spanish Fryar, are in the kind of it, which is tragi-comedy; but it was given to the people; and *I never writ any thing for myself, but Antony and Cleopatra.*"—Atterbury attributes both the introduction and subsequent disuse of *rhyme* upon the stage, to Dryden: "There is a third person (Dryden), the living glory of our English poetry, who has disclaimed the use of rhyme upon the stage, though no man ever employed it there so happily as he. It was the strength of his genius that first brought it into credit in plays, and it is the force of his example that has thrown it out again." (Atterbury's Works, vol. iv. p. 103.) The Earl of Orrery was one of the first who introduced entire tragedies in rhyme. The reign of rhyming-tragedies, which were introduced by the bad taste of Charles the Second, who had heard and admired them in France, lasted about fifteen years, from 1662, to 1676. A few Heroic plays afterwards appeared, but they were not long-lived. See Malone's Dryden, ii. p. 431.

nature, breaking out into that simplicity and freshness of expression, with which Shakespeare abounds, and which is of infinitely more value than the most eloquent pages of French declamation. As regards the subject of this play, from the shortness of the fragment, it is not easy to judge what beauties might be introduced, what difficulties might be overcome; but it does not appear to me to be happily chosen; it is of such a nature, as would force a poet to description, rather than action; it leaves the gentle, and temperate passions untouched; the characters are almost all wicked or designing; remarkable either for their baseness or atrocity; whose punishment does not excite our terror, whose misfortunes do not move our compassion; and we turn away from a plot that is laid in a tissue of ingratitude, adultery, and murder. Certain it is, that the character of this tragedy does not come within the scope of the rules laid down by Aristotle, in the eleventh section of his Poetics; but would rather be excluded by the third proposition, "That the misfortunes of a wicked person ought not to be represented; because, though such a subject may be pleasing from its moral tendency, it will produce neither pity nor terror; for our pity is excited by misfortunes undeservedly suffered, and our terror by some resemblance between the sufferer and ourselves; neither of these effects would therefore be produced by such an event."*

* See Twining's Translation of Aristotle's Poetics, p.

Mr. Mason remarks, "that something which unites the French and English style in drama, would be preferable to either." I should, however, question the possibility of putting this into practice; as the character of the poetry, the genius of the respective languages are so opposite, as to prevent their uniting and harmonizing into one system. The standard of excellence is not the same in each, and the rules of their criticism proceed upon different principles. Correct imitation of nature, in the extent that poetical imitation is justly allowed, boundless variety, and nice appropriation of character, masterly touches of manners and sentiments, quick observation, and clear delineation of the most faint and fleeting emotions of the mind, that just expression which directly conveys the intended thought with force and truth, 'great fancy and flowing words,' are among the chief merits of Shakespeare. In the French drama, collectively speaking, the individual is lost in the generalization of character. It is the class, and not the person, that is described; while in the place of natural feeling and character, a certain imaginary standard of excellence is erected; which, while it excelled the Greek drama in correctness and poetic propriety, left behind its beautiful description, its exquisite expression, and the varied

87. And Hurd's Dissertation on the Provinces of the Drama, vol. ii. p. 179. And Harris's Philological Inquiries, vol. i. p. 168.

spirit of its lyrical poetry. Rousseau seems to acknowledge this defect in the French drama, when he wishes to except one favourite poet from it. "Chez Racine (he says) tout est sentiment. Il a su faire *parler chacun pour soi*, et c'est en cela, qu'il est vraiment unique parmi les auteurs dramatiques de sa nation."* The drama of Gray appears to be founded in a considerable degree upon the latter plan; but the most complete specimen that we possess of this foreign style, is the Cato of Addison, which sacrificed greater beauties, to moral sentiments, to uncharacteristic imagery, and to cold and lifeless declamation; copied, as Dr. Warton justly observes, from the writings of Seneca, and the reflections of Tacitus. Good and beautiful com-

* On the want of character in the French plays, see Webb on Poetry, p. 104; who quotes a note from Dacier on the passage in Aristotle's Poetics, where he is censuring the poets of his time, for being weak in the manners. [Αἱ γὰρ τῶν νέων τῶν πλείστων, ἄηθεις τραγῳδίαι εἰσι.] "Aujourd'hui, dans la plûpart des pièces de nos poëtes, on ne connoit les mœurs des personnages qu'en les voyant agir."—There is a very curious passage in the 'Segresiana,' on this subject, p. 64: "Autre défaut de Racine, c'est que ses acteurs n'ont pas le caractère qu'ils doivent avoir. Etant une fois près de Corneille, sur le Théâtre à une représentation du Bajazet, il me dit,—Je me garderois bien de le dire à d'autre que vous, parcequ'on diroit, que j'en parlerois par jalousie, mais prenez y garde, il n'y a pas un seul personnage dans le Bajazet, qui ait les sentimens qu'il doit avoir, et que l'on a à Constantinople; ils ont tous, sous un habit Turc, le sentiment qu'on a au milieu de la France."

positions may undoubtedly be produced on both systems; and who would wish to deny the pleasure he receives from the poetry of Racine and Corneille? but the excellence of the one system over the other, must still remain unquestionable, as long as nature, and genius, and wit, and humour, can instruct and delight the world.

I must not be supposed to mean, by what I have said on the defects of the French Dramatists, that they have all of them failed in their endeavour to represent character and action with the faithfulness of an accurate copy; but rather that they never intended to represent it at all, according to our notions of imitation. As I think most will agree in the opinion expressed on this subject by a singularly acute and sensible writer,* I shall beg leave to state it in his own words. "To present a faithful picture of human life, or of human passions, seems not to have been his † (Corneille's) conception of the intention of tragedy. His object, on the contrary, seems to have been, to exalt and to elevate the imagination, to awaken only the greatest and noblest passions of the human mind, and, by presenting such scenes and such events

* See Alison's Essay on the Nature and Principles of Taste, p. 109, 4to.

† As Corneille introduced into the Drama, that *admiration* which is the End, of the *Epic* Poem: so, on the other hand, Davenant formed the Epic Poem, on the *close* and *pathetic* plot of the *Tragedy*. It is said, that Corneille pre-

alone as could most powerfully promote this end, to render the theatre a school of sublime instruction, rather than an imitation of common life. To effect this purpose, he was early led to see the necessity, or disposed by the greatness of his own mind, to the observation of an uniform character of dignity; to disregard whatever of common, of trivial, or even of pathetic, in the originals from which he copied, might serve to interrupt this peculiar flow of emotion; and instead of giving a simple copy of nature, to adorn the events he represented, with all that eloquence and poetry could afford. He maintains, accordingly, in all his best plays, amid much exaggeration, and much of the false eloquence of his time, a tone of commanding, and even of fascinating dignity, which disposes us almost to believe, that we are conversing with beings of a higher order than our own; and which blinds us, at least for a time, to all the faults and all the imperfections of his composition. I am far from being disposed to defend his opinions of tragedy; and still less, to excuse his extravagance and bombast. But I conceive, that no person can feel his beauties, or do justice to his merits, who does not regard his tragedies in this view; and I

ferred the Pharsalia to the Æneid. See Beattie on Poetry, p. 433. 'To move admiration, as Dryden says, is the delight of their serious Plays.' See his defence of an Essay on Dramatic Poetry, No. 4. See Life of Dryden, (Aldine Edition) p. xxxix, and Life of Young, p. xxi.

think that some allowance ought to be made for the faults of a poet, who first showed to his country the example of regular tragedy, and whose works the great Prince of Condé called, "The Breviary of Kings." *

When Mr. Mason proposed to join the French and English style in the drama, did he consider how difficult it is, to unite the poetical style, or character, of two distinct people; with all their separate combinations, their own associated images, and all those hereditary habits of thought, which distinguish not only the individual, but the nation? Though the poetry of one nation may certainly assimilate to that of another, more nearly than it does to a third; yet it always possesses some radical features of its own; some principles native to it, which do not bear transplanting; some strong fibrous parts, that will grow in none but their original soil. The nearest approximation perhaps of the genius of any two nations, was that of the Greeks and the Romans; yet, the latter were but imitators and followers of the former: they acknowledged the Greeks always as their masters in taste and genius; and even with this consideration we well know, how many authors, how much taste, how much genius, how much characteristic feeling,

* See some sensible observations on this subject, in Social Life of England and France compared, p. 198, by Miss Berry.

among the latter; never found a parallel, upon the shores of ancient Italy.

IV. Having thus briefly considered the poems of Gray, with regard to the harmony of their numbers, and the beauty of their language, I may now offer some remarks concerning the moral, and pathetic character which distinguishes them. I have mentioned, that Gray attributed the peculiar success of his Elegy in a Country Church-yard, not to the justness of the sentiment, or the beauty of the expression, but entirely to the captivating pathos of the subject; and this Mr. Mason had in view, when he applied to it the motto from Virgil, previously used by Young—"Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt."—Though the mind of Gray, like that of every real poet, was peculiarly susceptible of the impressions of natural scenery, and though it had a very strong and forcible hold of his feelings; yet he has never made such descriptions the entire subject-matter of any poem; but seems rather to hasten from them to the moral which they suggest; to the excitement of serious feeling, or pathetic sentiment, or powerful and sublime emotion.

In a letter which he wrote to Dr. Beattie,* containing some criticisms on part of the Minstrel,

* See Mason's Memoirs of Gray, vol. iv. p. 209.

he says,—"What weighs most with me, it will throw more of action, pathos, and interest into your design, which already abounds in reflection and sentiment. As to description, I have always thought that it made the most graceful ornament of poetry, but never ought to make the subject."—The practice of Gray seems to me, to coincide very correctly with his advice. He appears never to introduce natural description * solely for its own sake, but always with some further tendency, to draw from it some moral reflection, or to make it an agreeable embellishment of action. Not one of his poems can be called purely descriptive: but they generally commence with a view of nature, as of the morning, in the Ode to Vicissitude, or of evening, in the Elegy, which, suggesting some natural reflections to the mind of the poet, while they pass away themselves, leave forcible impressions of the feelings which they have inspired, and the train of thought which they have generated in the mind, the reason that induced Gray to reject the two stanzas towards the conclusion of the Elegy,

* In one of Swift's letters, (vol. xii. p. 441, ed. Nicholls,) he says—"One Thomson has succeeded the best in that way, i. e. blank verse, in four poems he has writ on the four seasons; yet I am not over-fond of them, because they are all *descriptive, and nothing is doing;* whereas Milton engages men in actions of the highest importance." See some reflections on this subject, as regards painting, in Du Bos, Réflexions sûr la Poësie et la Peinture, vol i. chap. vi. And Beattie on Poetry, p. 373, 4to.

"Him have we seen the greenwood side along,
While o'er the heath we hied, our labour done;
Oft as the woodlark pip'd her farewell song,
With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun:—"

And,

"There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found:
The redbreast loves to build, and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground!—"

though almost unobjectionable* in themselves, and indeed very beautiful, as pieces of description, probably was, least the descriptive part, which retarded the action of this latter part of the poem, might offend by its length, and interrupt by unnecessary images, the simplicity and unity of the composition. Dr. Blair observes with justice, "That

* I have said "almost unobjectionable;" because I have some doubts, whether the third line of the first stanza,

"Oft as the woodlark pip'd her *farewell* song,"

is, either in the thought or expression, quite suited to the character of the person who is supposed to make the reflection. I may also venture to suggest, whether the expression so well described in the following stanza, would be likely to be apparent to the rustic, or could be so clearly explained by him:

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love."

All the other stanzas of the speech are simple and exquisitely beautiful.

it is a great beauty in Milton's L'Allegro, that it is all alive and full of persons:" * and this observation the critic might have extended, with equal justice, to all his poetry.

I do not mention this feature in the poetry of Gray, as his *peculiar* praise; because the general effect of natural scenery, or the impression of certain objects related to it, is to suggest to the mind, by their grandeur, extent, and solemnity; or by awakening ideas of health, content, and the domestic tranquillity, which we justly associate with such scenes; a train of moral feelings; upon which depend many pleasing remembrances, many powerful affections, many hopes, many fears, and many images of happiness past or to come:

"——Vetustæ vitæ imago,
Et specimen venientis ævi——"

Such seems to be the general effect of natural scenery; however the liveliness, or duration of the impression may depend on the relative powers of the exciting cause. But in situations of peculiar grandeur and sublimity, on the summit of some lofty mountain, where the eye commands a prospect bounded only by the imperfect powers of human vision; or in the opposite situation, such as may be seen in the bosom of a mountainous country, amidst overhanging cliffs and torrents; in the lone-

* See Blair's Lectures, vol. iii. p. 157, and Huntingford's Apology for Monostrophics, p. 198.

liness of a sea view, with all its wild accompaniments of sight and sound; the moral feeling becomes so strong, from the unusual impression made by greatness, distance, and elevation, that it effaces, for a time, the parent-cause, and occupies the mind itself. The poets therefore who want a ground-work for reflections of this nature, have selected some remarkable situation, which might suggest greater variety of thought and imagery, than they could elsewhere command. Denham hints at this circumstance, though he expresses it with his usual quaintness of manner:

> "No wonder if *advantaged* in my flight,
> From taking wing from this *auspicious* height,
> Through untraced ways and airy paths I fly,
> More boundless in my *fancy*, than my *eye*."

"I must do," says Dr. Warton,* "a pleasing English poet the justice to observe, that it is this particular art that is the very distinguishing excellence of Cooper's Hill. Throughout which, the description of places and images, raised by the poet, are still tending to some hint, or leading into some particular reflection, upon moral life, or political institution; much in the same manner, as the real sight of such scenes, and prospects, is apt to give the mind a composed turn, and incline it to thoughts and contemplations that have a relation to the object. This is the great charm of the

* See Warton's Essay on Pope, vol. i. p. 31.

incomparable Elegy written in a Country Churchyard."

In addition to the remark of Dr. Warton, I may observe that the moral and religious sentiments in the poems of Gray, derive their effect from the perfect propriety of their situation, and their intimate connexion with the subject. They are not unskilfully inserted, or laboriously accumulated, or ostentatiously displayed; not merely sprinkled on the surface of the poem, but growing out of it, as an essential part of its structure and substance. They express the result of those impressions which the reader himself has already felt; and which produce great effect, when the mind has been prepared by the incident, to delight in the reflection.

Such, then, is that mental progress, in the course of which, if I may use the expression, the moral landscape, reflected from the natural one, becomes painted on the mind: an example presents itself in that just and elevated sentiment that closes the Progress of Poesy; in which the result of the whole poem may be said to be concentrated; and the last impression which the mind receives from the subject, is what leaves with it the noblest recollections of an art, before which the vulgar distinctions of wealth and birth and power sink into insignificance:

"Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way,
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,

Beneath the good how far, but far above the great."

Dr. Johnson has observed, that the Bard promotes no truth, moral or political. The Bard is certainly not written for the professed or ostentatious display of any moral truth; but I may with confidence assert, that it could not produce the effect which it does, if it had only delighted us with the display of the imagination, and had not impressed its moral tendency on the mind: and I must remark, that ill would that poet perform the office which he undertakes, if his poetry produced no moral effect upon the minds of his readers; if it had no tendency to ennoble the feeling, to elevate the sentiment, to soften the passions, to breathe its finer spirit into the soul; and by raising it to purer contemplations, detach it from those low and sordid objects, that at once degrade its office, and impair its nature.

The tendency of 'The Bard' is to show the retributive justice that follows an act of tyranny and wickedness; to denounce on Edward, in his person and his progeny, the effect of the crime he had committed in the massacre of the Bards; to convince him, that neither his power nor situation could save him from the natural and necessary consequences of his guilt; that not even the *virtues* which he possessed, could atone for the vices with which they were accompanied:

> "Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
> Nor e'en thy *virtues*, Tyrant, shall avail."

This is the real tendency of the poem; and well worthy it was of being adorned and heightened by such a profusion of splendid images, and beautiful machinery. We must also observe how much this moral feeling increases, as we approach the close; how the poem rises in dignity; and by what a fine gradation the solemnity of the subject ascends. The Bard commenced his song with feelings of sorrow for his departed brethren, and his desolate country. This despondence, however, has given way to emotions of a nobler, and more exalted nature. What can be more magnificent than the vision which opens before him to display the triumph of justice, and the final glory of his cause? and it may be added, what can be more forcible or emphatic than the language in which it is conveyed?

"But, oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height,
Descending slow their glitt'ring skirts unroll;
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!"

The fine apostrophe to the shade of Taliessin completes the picture of exultation:

"Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay."

The triumph of justice, therefore, is now complete. The vanquished has risen superior to his conqueror, and the reader closes the poem with feelings of content and satisfaction. He has seen

he Bard uplifted both by a divine energy, and by he natural superiority of virtue; and the conqueror ıas shrunk into a creature of hatred and abhor-ence:

> "Be thine despair, and sceptred care;
> To triumph, and to die, are mine."

If there be any truth in these observations, ıurely some objections must arise with regard to hose poems which are purely descriptive, with little ır nothing in them of manners and sentiments: ıuch, for instance, as large parts of Thomson, and ıome poems of a writer contemporary with Gray, whose genius has justly given him a very respect-ıble rank among the English poets, and whose nerits in other respects are far from inconsiderable. I allude particularly to many poems of T. Warton, which appear to me from this cause imperfect and ınfinished in their nature; stopping at that point where the picture of the natural scenery is finished in the mind, has united all its effects, and when the moral feeling begins to be excited; when the thought passes from the effect to the cause, from the sublimity and beauty and grandeur, displayed in the creation, to the beings who ennoble it by their presence, or to the wise and animating Mind that created and pervades it.* In this case, though

* See Gilpin's Obs. on the Wye, p. 60. I take the li-ɔerty of quoting a passage from one of the Essays of Dugald Stewart, on the Sublime; as well for the relation it bears

the attention of the poet may have been ever so steadily fixed upon his subject, and his representation ever so accurate, or even new; the reader will demand, in addition, the exercise of the imagination, the excitement of the feeling, the relation of the object to the different passions of the mind; and he will call upon the poet to awaken those numberless analogies which are sleeping in his mind, and which would instantly start up at the call of his inspiration.

In the 'Ode to Spring' by Gray, the imagery he might have introduced, would be amply furnished

to the subject under consideration, as for the instance which he has so admirably produced from a poem by Gray.—"The sublime effect of rocks, and of cataracts; of huge ridges of mountains; vast and gloomy forests; of immense and impetuous rivers; of the boundless ocean; and in general, of every thing which forces on the attention the idea of creative power, is owing in part to the irresistible tendency which that idea has to raise the thoughts toward Heaven.—The influence of some of these spectacles, in awakening religious impressions, is nobly exemplified in Gray's ode, written at the Grande Chartreuse—an Alpine scene of the wildest and most awful grandeur, where every thing appears fresh from the hand of Omnipotence, inspiring a sense of the more immediate presence of the Divinity.

Præsentiorem et conspicimus Deum,
Per invias rupes, fera per juga,
Clivosque præruptos, sonantes
Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem
Quamsi repostus sub trabe citreâ
Fulgeret auro, et Phidiacâ manu," &c.

Philos. Essays, p. 363.

by the subject, and could be limited only by the will of the poet. It is however to be remarked, that he has confined himself to the assemblage of a very few images and incidents, suited to the occasion, but by which his picture becomes more really finished, than it could by the most laborious assemblage of descriptions. To the studious and contemplative mind, the season of the Spring undoubtedly will suggest, at different times, the same train of thought which the poet has established; but it is probable, or indeed certain, that it will not be presented to the mind in so strong and uniform a manner, cleared of all discordant images, and unnecessary and confused additions. I need not observe, that in the works of a common poet, it would prove either a mere transcript of nature, or something even more imperfect. The description would be too detailed, the smaller parts would be mingled with the greater features: the uniform tendency of the whole would be broken, and enumeration would supply the place of selection. In this poem, as in all the others which he has written, Gray has introduced much of the moral and the pathetic character. Even in so short a poem as the Elegy, he did not think its plan was perfect, unless the reader were interested by something more awakening than description; unless he animated and peopled the landscape which he described. "A description (says Mr. Twining*) may be, but a poem cannot

* See Twining's Aristotle, 4to. p. 33. See also some

be founded upon what Pope somewhere calls, an *entire landscape*, without *human* figures, an image of nature, solitary and undisturbed."

In the poem of 'Spring' the expression of the moral feeling occupies a larger space than in the other poems; indeed the original subject seems to be nearly forsaken. The poet, instead of continuing the description with which he commenced, has seized upon a single incident in the picture, taken it out of the general description, and followed the train of thought which it suggested, till the thread of the connexion seemed almost lost; but a fine and unexpected turn of expression, a single word at the close, brings the mind back, and places before it the original scenery with which the poem opened:

"We frolic while 'tis *May*.'

Some critics, I believe, have thought that the 'Elegy in a Country Church-yard' is disjointed and unconnected in its plan; but it is sufficient to observe, that it leaves one strong and general impression on the mind; the result of the connexion of the images, and the unity of the subject. The Elegy is an interesting picture of the feelings, manners, and habits of the village poor: it is intended to awaken our sympathy; and to extend

observations on this subject, by Du Bos, in his Reflexions, vol. i. chap. 6. Consult Les Epîtres de Mad. Sévigné, vol. i. l. lxix, and Tableau de la Littérature par Victor Fabre, p. 85.

the sphere of our associations among objects so well calculated to excite them. It tends also to lessen our exclusive admiration of those great and elevated scenes of life, which we are too much accustomed to suppose, are alone worthy of our regard. This seems to be the general feeling which is excited: but towards the close of the poem, by a transition founded on this simple association, that, as the poet has not been "unmindful of the dead," so his own death shall not pass without commemoration; by this poetical transition, the interest that had before been previously diffused over the fate of many, becomes now narrowed and directed to the fortune of one: the same train of feeling is preserved, but more precise in its circumstances, and more strong in its power of excitement; and thus, by the insertion of this pathetic episode, the descriptive poem closes with a highly dramatic effect.

V. After venturing to offer the foregoing remarks on Gray's poetry in general, I now come to the particular consideration of the poem of 'The Bard.' It is well known, that this poem had been accused of obscurity; to obviate which, Gray found it necessary to add some explanatory * notes. This

* "That Gray was conscious of the fault [obscurity] imputed to his ode, The Bard, (the finest, I believe, that was ever written in any language,) is manifest to me from two particulars. One is, his prefixing to it, for a motto, *Φωναντα Συνετοισιν*. The other is, the *explanatory notes*,

charge has, however, been still repeated, upon the supposition that the poem should be sufficiently clear in its language and plan, without requiring additional assistance. But in the first place, it is to be considered that some degree of obscurity must always attend the *prophetic poem;* and that he who wishes it otherwise, does not demand a prophecy but a direct narrative. Such obscurity we find in many of the choral parts of Æschylus, particularly, as was required by the subject, in the Agamemnon; compared indeed with which, the ode of Gray possesses much advantage in point of perspicuity. It descends into minute particularities; while the sublime odes of the Grecian bard acquire their obscurity, from the very general and dark language, in which the coming events are foretold. I shall just mention in this place, that the distinctness or obscurity of a prophecy, will depend mainly for its propriety upon this consideration; whether it proceed from the lips of one whom the poet supposes by *supernatural* means to be gifted, as in the Bard of Gray, with visions of futurity; or whether, as is frequently the case in the choral odes of the Greek tragedians, the prophecy is uttered by those,

which with great reluctance he added at last by the advice of his friends, among whom was the writer of this letter; who drew up an analysis of the ode, for his own use, as mentioned in the life of Gray."—Remarks on the Pursuits of Literature by John Mainwaring, B. D. Margaret Professor of Divinity, p. 19.

to whom wisdom gives prescience, and experience imparts a knowledge of the natural order of events;

> "Till old experience do attain*
> To something like prophetic strain."

By those whose calm passions and clear sense foretell the effects of imprudence and sin; and who are able to see that, in the common analogy by which the world is conducted, punishment must follow guilt; that the furies will haunt the parricide; and that the crimes of adultery, or incest, will be attended with misery, remorse, and death.

The obscurity, however, complained of in Gray, is such only, as of necessity arises from the plan and conduct of a prophecy; for it does not proceed from any affected peculiarity of diction, or from a studied and intentional darkness, through which the reader is to seek his way, as in Lycophron; but to those who bring to the perusal of the Bard only the common outlines of English history, the ode is perfectly intelligible; as they must be acquainted with the history appertaining to the Trojan war, to understand the prophetic ode of Nereus in Horace. In the prophetic poem, one point of history alone is told, and the rest is to be acquired previously by the reader; as in the contemplation of an historical picture, which commands only one moment of time, our memory must supply us with

* "Et facile existimare potest *Prudentiam* esse quodammodo *Divinationem*." Corn. Nepotis Vit. Attici, c. xvi.

the necessary links of knowledge; and that point of time selected by the painter, must be illustrated by the spectator's knowledge of the past or future, of the cause or the consequences.

I am pleased to find in Dr. Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric,* some corroboration of this opinion. "I know (he says) no style to which darkness of a certain cast is more suited than the prophetical: many reasons might be assigned, which render it improper, that prophecy should be perfectly understood, before it be accomplished. Besides, we are certain, that a production may be very dark before the accomplishment, and yet so plain afterwards, as scarcely to admit a doubt in regard to the events suggested. It does not belong to critics to give laws to prophets; nor does it fall within the confines of any human art, to lay down rules for compositions so far-above art. Thus far, however, we may *warrantly* observe, that when the prophetic style is imitated in poetry, the piece ought, as much as possible, to possess the character above mentioned. This character, in my opinion, is possessed in a very eminent degree by Gray's ode, called 'The Bard.' It is all darkness to one, who knows nothing of the English history posterior to the reign of Edward the First, and all light to one who is acquainted with that history: a kind of

* See Dr. Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric, vol. ii. p. 129, and Lowth. Prelect. Poes. Hebraicæ, p. 85, 4to.

writing, whose peculiarities can scarce be considered as exceptions from ordinary rules."

This complaint, however, of obscurity, I suppose to have arisen partly from this circumstance, that in epic or dramatic compositions, the reader may come to the poem without any previous knowledge of the subject; because the structure of those fables requires, that in the course of their actions, they should elucidate and unfold themselves. Every step that is taken, in some measure removes what is difficult, and brightens what is obscure; till at length the intention and unity of the whole is completed. The prophetic poem, of course, is formed upon a plan wholly different, leaving the reader by his own knowledge to explain the poet, and to look for a completion of the prophecy, not in the page of the writer, but among the stores of his own memory. If the circumstances of the poem were too closely narrated, the prophetic character would be lost, and with it, the excitement of those powerful passions, hope and fear, the distant forebodings, the mystic grandeur, and the solemn shadowing of things to come.

> Pauca tibi e multis; prohibent nam cætera fata
> Scire Helenum, farique vetat Saturnia Juno.

To the effect of such a poem upon the mind of the reader, the following passage from the preface*

* See Discours sur la Fable, p 14, and Gerard on Taste, p. 4.

of M. de la Motte, will be perfectly applicable. " D'ailleurs l'esprit a une certaine activité qu'il faut satisfaire. Il aime à voir plusieurs choses à la fois, et à distinguer les rapports; il se complaît dans cette pénétration adroite, qui sçait découvrir plus qu'on ne lui montre : et en apperçevant ce qui étoit couvert de quelque voile, il croit en quelque sorte créer ce qu'on lui cachoit."

The very intent indeed of a poem of this nature, is opposite to that of the epic or dramatic fable. In my opinion, the contrary complaint might be urged, nor without justice, against Horace; that the circumstances in his prophetic ode are expressed with too much clearness. Certain it is, that it excites none of those anxious feelings that attend a tale only half told; and seems to undraw too widely the curtain that covers the shadows of futurity. In the ode of Horace, the prophecy extends only to the approaching fate of the Prince of Troy; and every actor in the scene is expressly named. In the Bard of Gray, not only the fate of Edward, but of his descendants is foretold, and the vision extends through a long race of kings.

" ——Thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first;—
—A third is like the former——"

It is not therefore without justice, that the language of the Roman poet is more precise, as the prophet may be supposed to have a clearer insight into the events immediately approaching in the

person of one man, than those removed to a greater distance, and divided among several characters: and also, because the gift of superior foresight, may naturally be ascribed to the Deity, who is the supposed Author of the prophecy. The skill of Gray is, I think, eminently shown, in the superior distinctness with which he has marked those parts of his prophecies which are speedily to be accomplished; and in the gradations by which, as he descends, he has insensibly melted the more remote into the deeper and deeper shadowings of general language. The first prophecy is the fate of Edward the Second. In that the bard has pointed out the very night in which he is to be destroyed; has named the river that flowed around his prison, and the castle, that was the scene of his sufferings:

"Mark the *year*, and mark the *night*,
When *Severn* shall re-echo with affright;
The shrieks of death through *Berkley's* roof that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king."

How different is the imagery, when Richard the Second is described; and how indistinctly is the luxurious monarch marked out in the form of the morning, and his country in the figure of the vessel!

"The swarm that in thy noontide beam were born,
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding on the azure realm,

In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow, and pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his ev'ning prey."

The last prophecy is that of the civil wars, and of the death of the two young princes. No place, no name is now noted: and all is seen through the dimness of figurative expression:

"Above, below,
The rose of snow,
Twin'd with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled boar
In infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade."

As the subject of Gray's poem is drawn from a period of English history not very remote, it was proper to avoid too circumstantial and plain a description, which would destroy the dignity required.—It appears then, from the obscurity we meet with in almost all prophetic poems, that it belongs to this species of composition: and that those who have attempted to write poems of this character, have felt how necessary it was to surround themselves with some degree of indistinctness proportioned to their taste and judgment. In Lycophron, however, the almost insurmountable obscurity arises from his strange and pedantic phraseology; which, added to his confusion of Metaphor, has involved in a general mass of darkness the scattered gleams of genius that struggle through the mystic obscurity of that singular

poem;* in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, from the accidental corruptions of the text, as well as from the metaphorical ornaments and the cumbrous magnificence of his diction. How much to unfold, and what to leave gradually to be discovered; in short, the degree of clearness and obscurity in which a poetical prophecy should be laid before the reader, must always be a difficult part of the poet's business. Gray's judgment is certainly displayed in omitting the names of the personages of this poem; as in a tale of history so well known, the name would instantly call up the whole circumstances that follow in the recital, and the force of the prophecy would be lessened, or lost.

—Οἰδιποῦν γὰρ ἂν δὲ φῶ
Τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἰσάσιν—

Before I finish my observations on the prophetic character of this ode, I must remark, that there appears to me one passage, and only one, in which I cannot help considering the unity of the poetical thoughts, and the tendency of the poem to produce one particular effect upon the mind, imperfectly preserved. It is apparent, that the agitation of the bard's mind is extreme: his anger, his scorn, his hatred of the tyrant, his sorrow for his friends, and his contempt of a desolate and dishonoured

* "Latebrasque Lycophronis atri," Stat. Sylv. Lib. v. 3, 157. Lycophron, Nicander, Callimachus, were *grammarians*, and used *hard* words. See Scaligerana, art. 'Pindare.'

life, is forcibly described. This character is uniformly sustained, till he has finished his poetical destiny of Edward and his successors; and then, as if he was overwhelmed with a fresh tide of indignation, and withholding his greatest blow for the last, he returns from denouncing woe on the blood of the Plantagenets, to Edward himself: and to make his last denunciation of wrath more dreadful, he foretells the speedy death of his wife—his beloved Eleanor of Castile:

> "Half of thy heart we consecrate.
> (The web is wove. The work is done.)"

That such impetuosity of feeling may suddenly be changed into great and unexpected* joy, is not unnatural; and accordingly when he foresees the restoration of his own country, in the Welsh descent of the House of Tudor, he with poetical truth of character breaks out into an exultation, founded as well on the future prosperity of his own race, as on the baffled and frustrated cruelty of the tyrant. This joy is finely expressed in the apostrophe to the shade of Taliessin:

> "Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear!
> They breathe a soul to animate thy clay."

And if this impetuosity of feeling had been carried on by the address to Edward:

* On the sudden, and violent nature of the passion of Joy; and its great difference, in this respect, from the opposite passion of Grief, see Ad. Smith's History of Astronomy, p. 8, 4to.

Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
ais'd by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?" &c.

whole poem would have preserved a uniform consistent character. The bard, however, in last stanza, and just before he "plunges into less night," points out the future poets, who e to adorn the reign of Elizabeth, in the fol- ing lines:

"The verse adorn again
Fierce war, and faithful love,
And truth severe, by fairy fiction drest.
In buskin'd measures move
Pale grief, and pleasing pain,
With horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice, as of the cherub choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire." &c.

Independently of the interruption which these es, by their length, give to the *uniformity* of ı emotion, perhaps they are not (however beau- ul) well adapted to the character of the Welsh rd at any time; and surely every one must knowledge that they are most unsuited in subject- ıtter, in expression, and turn of feeling, to the ful situation in which he stood, and the deed ıich he was just preparing to commit; the *revival the Bards*, it also must be remarked, is suffi- ıntly noticed in the preceding stanza:

"What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play!"

Gray in a letter addressed to Mr. Mason says, speaking of this poem: "I am well aware of many weakly things *towards the conclusion*, but hope the end itself will do."—As there is certainly nothing weak in the preceding stanza, it is fair to suppose that he alluded to these verses, which I have just cited; and the criticism on which, I must leave to the opinion of the reader; just adding, that I think he will perceive, upon a careful perusal of them, something which indicates that they were produced after the first heat of the composition was past.* There is a calmness, a care, an ornament about them, very different from the real language of passion so admirably sustained through the rest of the poem.

So far as to the *prophetic* cast of this ode. It is called a *Pindaric* ode, with greater propriety

* The allegory in which the reign of Richard the Second is described, and which I have already quoted, is remarkable, I think, for the extreme beauty of the transition by which it is introduced:

"Gone to salute the rising morn."

With true lyrical spirit, the last image at once gives a train of thought to the poet's mind, and he suddenly breaks forth:

"Fair laughs the morn," &c.

Whether this allegorical allusion may not, by some, be deemed to be too far extended, considering the passionate emotion of the bard's mind, may at least be suggested. Dr. Priestley has justly pointed out the distinctive propriety of the short metaphor, or the extended allegory, according to

than perhaps has been generally remarked; I mean, with regard to the form and structure of its measure. The English odes of Cowley, and of other authors, which they have called Pindaric, and which they have formed in measures of irregular versification, unconfined but by their fancy, have been so denominated by a peculiar and unfortunate misnomer. Among the Greek writers, that quality which particularly distinguished the odes of Pindar from those of later writers, was the confinement of his metre, and the regularity of his strophe and antistrophe. Οὔκετι, says Aristotle,* ἐχοῦσιν Ἀντιστρόφους, πρότερον δὲ εἶχον. It appears that the principal authors of this lyrical corruption, were Timotheus and Philoxenus. Dionysius,† in his nineteenth section of his Treatise περὶ Συνθέσεως Ὀνόματων, says, Παρά γε τοῖς ἀρχαίοις, τεταγμένος ἦν ὁ διθύραμβος. According to Diony-

the situation. "Extended similes give universally more satisfaction in the description of a still scene, than in the representation of a very active and busy one. In the former case, the mind is in no haste, as we may say, to return to the principal subject: in the latter, it is often impatient of the least diversion from it." The reader may find some very sound observations on this subject, supported by sufficient examples, in his Lectures on Oratory and Criticism, p. 174, 4to. And Webb, on Poetry, p. 107.

* Vid. Aristot. Problemata xix. Sect. 15. Consult Warburton's Note in Warton's Pope, vol. iv. p. 220.

† Vid. Dionys. de Structura Orationis, ed. Upton, p. 156; on Timotheus, see Censorinus de Die Natali, p. 145, ed. Havercamp.

sius, there were three several changes in the lyrical poem, or ode. Alcæus and Sappho, the oldest writers in this line, had short strophes and antistrophes, consisting of a few lines each, and very short epodes. Stesichorus and Pindar enlarged and lengthened them, *μείζους ἐργασάμενοι τὰς περιόδους, εἰς πολλὰ μέτρα, καὶ, κῶλα, διένειμαν αὐτὰς.* But the Dithyrambic poets who followed, Timotheus, Telestes, and Philoxenus, introduced other measures, so as almost to render themselves free of all laws.—A confirmation of the truth of this passage from Dionysius, may be found in the Treatise of Plutarch *περὶ Μοῦσικης*, cap. λά, where he cites a passage from Aristoxenus, who says, "That Telesias the Theban forsook the beautiful example of Pindar, Dionysius, and others, in which he had been educated and instructed, deceived by the new manner of Timotheus and Philoxenus, *Ὑπὸ τῆς σκηνικῆς τε, καὶ ποικίλης Μουσικῆς, ὡς καταφρονῆσαι τῶν καλῶν ἐκείνων, ἐν οἷς ἀνετράφη, τὰ Φιλοξένου δὲ, καὶ Τιμοθέου ἐκμανθάνειν, καὶ τούτων αὐτῶν τὰ ποικιλώτατα καὶ πλείστην ἐν αὐτοῖς ἔχοντα καινοτομίαν.*

In this very brief sketch of the poetry of the lyre, we see the history of the rise and decline of poetry in general. The simple structure, bordering on hardness in the first instance: secondly, the completion of its conformation, and the perfection of its parts: and, lastly, by that love of variety which is always acting with so much force upon

ıe arts, we behold the beauty of its structure
yed, and an irregular and loose system of
cation built upon its ruins. What the Roman
ays of Pindar,

> "Seu per audaces nova *dithyrambos*
> Verba devolvit, numerisque fertur,
> Lege solutis,"*

ıot apply to any part of Pindar's poetry now
ning; but solely to that species of poetry in
ı he composed, called dithyrambic; and of
ı no specimens have reached us. Instead
fore of the odes of Cowley, and other writers,
Pindaric odes, they would properly rank
· what is called by Greek writers, the Φιλοξ-
: τρόπος, and would be the ᾠδαι μάκραι, καὶ
ἴδεις. Nor was it without reason that Gray
l his a Pindaric ode; because in what is called
ormal part of it, it is modelled after the ex-
ɜ of the Theban bard. It is mentioned as
's opinion in the Memoirs of Mason,† "that

*hese lines in Horace are, I should think, the foun-
of the common opinion, that the Odes of Pindar are
lar and wild in their formation. Gerard, in his 'Essay
nius,' has fallen into this mistake: "Pindar's fancy
ys) was wild; his versification also was irregular."
, p. 424.

†ee Mason's Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 157. I may mention
that the 'Progress of Poetry' is purely a *narrative* ode.
Bard' is, strictly speaking, a *dramatic* ode. Such are
ndaric odes mentioned by Mr. Twining, viz. Olymp.

each stanza of the lyric ode should have but *nine* lines, to make the ear perceive the return of the regular metre; and that Pindar has many such odes." He appears however to have altered his opinion on this subject, before he wrote The Bard. He probably found, that an ode of this structure did not admit sufficient variety. The Ode by Fenton to Lord Gower,* which received the praise of Pope and Akenside, is formed in stanzas of ten lines.

In some observations on this point, Mr. Mason infers the superiority of the regular lyric stanza, over the irregular dithyrambic ode, from the comparative easiness of the latter: it being in the power of any poet to construct such an ode. "There

i. Ant. γ. Olymp. vi. Epod. α. γ. Olymp. viii. Ep. β. Pyth. viii. Stroph. γ. and also the odes of Horace which Dr. Warton has pointed out in his Essay on Pope (vol. i. p. 396.); viz. Lib. I. Od. xv., Lib. III. Od. iii. ver. 11. 37. and Epode v.

* As an instance of the structure, as well as spirit of this ode, the following stanza may be quoted:

"Beneath the pole, on hills of snow,
Like Thracian Mars, the undaunted Swede,
To dint of sword defies the foe,
In fight unknowing to recede.
From Volga's banks, the impetuous Czar
Leads forth his furry troops to war,
Fond of the softer southern sky;
The Soldan galls the Illyrian coast.
But soon the miscreant moony host
Before the victor-cross shall fly."

was nothing," he says,* "that Gray more disliked, than that chain of irregular stanzas which Cowley introduced, and falsely called Pindaric; and which, from the extreme facility of execution, produced a number of miserable imitators. Had the regular return of strophe, antistrophe, and epode, no other merit than that of extreme difficulty, it ought, on this very account, to be valued; because we well know, that 'easy writing is no easy reading.'" Voltaire, it is well known, in the preface to the Œdipe, has used a similar argument, in saying, "that the difficulty of composing in rhyme in French plays, is a great cause of the pleasure which we receive in the composition. Tragedy," he says, "would be destroyed if it were in blank verse; remove the difficulty, and you take away the merit."† In a letter also to Mr. Walpole, he says, "Vous n'observez, vous autres libres Bretons, ni unité de lieu, ni unité de tems, ni unité d'action. En vérité vous n'en faites pas mieux. La vraisemblance doit être comptée pour quelque chose. L'art en devient plus difficile, et les difficultés vaincues donnent en tout genre du plaisir et de la gloire." And in another part of the same letter he adds, "Permettez-moi de vous dire encore un mot sur la

* See Mason's Memoirs of Gray, vol. iii. p. 156, and Cobb's letter prefixed to his 'Female Reign, an Ode,' in Dorset's Poems, 1757, p. 119.

† This passage from Voltaire is quoted in Dr. Blair's Lectures, vol. iii. p. 316, see Walpole's Works, vol. v. p. 634, 636, 4to.

rime que vous nous reprochez. Presque toutes les pièces de Driden sont rimées. Et je soutiens encore que Cinna, Atalie, Iphigénie étant rimés, quiconque voudrait secouer ce joug en France, serait regardé comme un artiste foible, qui n'auroit pas la force de le porter.

" En qualité de vieillard il faut que je vous dire une anecdote. Je demandais un jour à Pope pourquoi Milton n'avoit pas rimé son poëme, dans le tems que les autres poëtes rimoient leurs poëmes à l'imitation des Italiens; il me répondit—because he could not." Both these opinions may seem to be branched off from the general observation made by Aristotle in his Treatise on Rhetoric,* τὸ χαλεπώτερον, μεῖζον ἀγαθον, and which to a certain extent seems to be strongly founded upon nature and truth.

In regard to Mr. Mason's opinion, he has perhaps laid down his position in too unlimited a manner; and placed rather more stress upon the metrical construction of the ode than is due. There are certainly other great difficulties in the composition of the ode, besides the occurrence of the regular metre. It must require nearly the same talents to construct a good ode, either in measure irregular or fixed: nor would inferior talents succeed, though released from the bondage of such

* See Aristotelis Rhetorica, lib. i. cap. vii. ed. Holwell. And A. Smith's Philosophical Essays, 4to. p. lviii. in the account of his Life, by D. Stewart.

restriction. If we receive greater pleasure from the regular ode, which I fully believe, it must be sought for from another cause, in conjunction with that of the 'difficulté surmontée;' chiefly from the *uniformity* we associate with our notions of all poetical composition; from our being *accustomed* to measures which have regularity and proportion in their parts; and from the perplexity and confusion arising in our minds, from intricacy and irregularity of structure. There is a repugnance which we feel at first to the introduction of any novel form of composition: perhaps there is no young reader of poetry, who does not at first dislike the use of the *triplet* in Dryden, because it is unexpected; and indeed in all cases, the beauty of it will depend on some nice preparation in the cadence, and on the skilfulness of its introduction in the preceding lines. Τὸ *συνήθες*, says Aristotle,* *ἡδὺ μᾶλλον τοῦ ἀσυνηθοῦς*. And in a problem he has on this subject, he says, *Διὰ τὶ ἥδιον ἀκούουσιν ἀδόντων, ὅσα προεπιστάμενοι τυγχανωσι τῶν μέλων, ἢ ὧν μὴ ἐπιστάνται.* And in the forty-first problem of the same chapter, he asks, *Διὰ τὶ ἥδιον ἀκούουσιν ἀδόντων, ὅσα ἂν προεπιστάμενοι τύχωσι τῶν μέλων, ἢ ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιστῶνται. πότερον ὅτι μᾶλλον δῆλος ἔστιν ὁ τυγχάνων, ὥσπερ σκόπου, ὅταν γνωρίζωσι τὸ φερόμενον. γνωριζόντων δὲ, ἡδὺ θεωρεῖν· ἢ ὅτι συμπαθὴς ἔστιν ὁ ἀκροατὴς, τῷ τὸ γνώριμον ἄδοντι.*

* Vid. Problemata *θ. ε.* p. 763, and 768. ed. Duval: and Probl. *θ—μ.* p. 768.

The assertion of Voltaire is of less force, because it is not known, that such a thing can exist, as a French tragedy in blank verse. Rhyme, and the inversion of the words, are the constituents of their verse. It is laid down as a rule by the best writers, that no word * should be used in French poetry, that may not with equal propriety be used in prose: and blank verse could not be formed in a language, whose verse invariably demands a pause in the middle of each line, and has a regular accent on the sixth foot before the pause. Before it can be proved that blank verse can be successfully written in French,† it must be shown, that this pause and accent can be removed and altered. Independently of that, I may be permitted to doubt whether Voltaire has not overrated (for the sake of the argument) the difficulty of rhyming: though, perhaps, it exists in the French language more than in others. We know, however, that an Englishman has translated the whole of the long poem of Hudibras into French verses of four feet, with admirable success,‡ where one would suppose the

* See Voltaire's Henriade, c. iii. and note.

† M. de la Motte says, that it is impossible to write a poem of any considerable length in French, which shall not weary the reader by the perpetual uniformity of its sounds. Does not this partly account for almost all the Didactic Poems by French authors being written in Latin verse?—"Boileau se vantoit d'avoir appris à Racine à *rimer difficilement*." v. Rousseau's Emile, vol. ii. p. 36, ed. Casin.

‡ I allude to that extraordinary work, 'Hudibras, Poëme écrit dans le tems des troubles d'Angleterre, et traduit en

difficulty of finding rhymes would be absolutely insuperable: and when even this poem, with its short lines and strange phraseology, has been excellently versified, shall we lay such great stress upon the difficulty of finding rhymes in the plays of Racine, Corneille, or other authors. I am not sure also, whether the rule of 'la difficulté surmontée,' though it has a certain force in the versification of the French drama, where so much art of various kind is displayed, may not act with less power in that species of English poetry, which has always relied more on its fertility of invention, and richness and sublimity of imagination, than on its precise conformity to the exact rules of criticism.

Upon the whole, it appears to me, that the superior pleasure which we receive from the regular lyric ode,* arises from two causes. First, from

vers François,' Londres, 1757, by Mr. Townley, an officer in the Irish Brigade, and Knight of the Order of St. Louis. He died in 1782, aged 85.

* The odes in blank verse, by Milton, Collins, and T. Warton, have less singularity in their numbers, than perhaps is generally supposed. They consist of two common Heroic, or five-footed verses, with an Alexandrine or six-footed. The last divided into two portions, by the pause, at the end of the third foot. Surrey has an Alexandrine in 4th Æneis, v. 23, 72, 714; see Nott's ed. vol. i. p. 416-7; see Jortin's Tracts, vol. i. p. 182. Milton admits an Alexandrine into his Par. Lost, ix. ver. 249; which, together with the two preceding lines, forms the metre of these blank-verse odes.

"Assist us—But if much converse perhaps

the satisfaction which is derived from the harmony and proportion of its parts; from its connected variety, and corresponding relation in itself.* This is entirely lost in the irregular ode; because there is no room to institute that *comparison*, in which we delight so much, when we contemplate all works of art and design. Secondly, we participate in the pleasure that attends any difficult or laborious work overcome and subdued by our skill. Although, in the long heroic verse, I think rhyme is little source of difficulty; yet it indisputably is, when added to the short lyric stanza. Now if a poem can be so constructed as to present these difficulties of such a nature that they are evidently not *insuperable* to genius and skill, its merit will no doubt

> Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield,
> For solitude sometimes
> Is best society." Par. Lost, ix. 249.

Young has admitted the Alexandrine into his Night Thoughts:

"The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great."

Cowper also, in the 2d book of his Task:

"Storms rise to overwhelm them, or if stormy winds."

I perceive that it is also authorised by Mr. Southey in his Madoc. It is to be found in Spenser, in the 2d line of the stanza, iii. 41:

"He bound that piteous ladye prisoner, now releast."

* See Johnson's Life of Prior, p. 183, of Congreve, p. 201, of Cowley, p. 52, of Dryden, p. 443, in Murphy's Ed. 1801.

be enhanced by the conquest which it has made. But if the difficulties are such, as cannot be overcome, but only avoided by awkwardness of language, ungracefulness of idiom, and obscurity of sense, then they must give way to metre of an easier construction. The cost of the labour would manifestly be far greater than the gain: and the taste that delights to sport in such perverse misapplications of ingenuity, must be regarded as corrupt. Such, for instance, would be the case, if in the common lyric stanza, we should be forced to begin each line with a certain letter, or to make it an acrostic; or to end every line with a double rhyme. It would then become merely an exercise of ingenuity, and not a work of genius: and this is the plain and broad distinction, that the younger Racine did not see, when he calls this argument a paradox, and says, that instead of admiring we despise "ces vers techniques, enfans du mauvais goût, les Rophaliques, Retrogrades, Léonins, Numéraux, Soladiques, Acrostiches, &c." * It is true that we should despise them, if they were attempted to be displayed as works of genius; or if they selected subjects above their nature; or if they mixed themselves with the ode, the epic or tragic poem: and besides this, their example proves only the excess or abuse of the doctrine, which of course is no argument against its confined and legitimate use.

* See Réflexions sur la Poësie, par M. L. Racine, p. 105

This construction then of the ode,* by strophe and epode, or by some other regular return of certain metres at stated intervals, appears to be founded upon natural principles, which are not likely to be extinguished: and may I not also add, that it is authorized by the best examples in all countries. Nor do I find, that it is proved by those who are of a contrary opinion, that it has excluded any beauties which might have been introduced into looser compositions. Indeed, it is more likely to produce the contrary effect. The same principle holds good in all other arts: and, as Sir Joshua Reynolds says,† "If difficulties overcome, make a great part of the merit of art; difficulties evaded can deserve but little commendation."

In the elegance as well as magnificence of his

* In favour of the Regular Ode; the strongly-marked design may be urged, as one source of beauty. But the exact degree of regularity will probably remain a subject of dispute; as few agree, on that combination of uniformity, and variety; design, and proportion, which should appear in any work of art. And thus among the vast variety and change of measures used by our old English poets, as may be seen by turning over the pages of 'England's Helicon,' and other books; how few have been approved by time, and descended into common and constant use: and those few, of plain, simple, and marked construction. See Gray's Observ. on English Metre, ed. Mathias, vol. ii. p. 29, and Advertisement to a Handful of Pleasant Delights in Heliconia, (reprint.)

† See Sir J. Reynolds' Discourses, ed. Malone, vol. i. p. 287, and Stewart's Essays, p. 238.

diction, in the force and energy of his style, in the sublimity of the images, and in the boldness of the metaphorical language, Gray's poem resembles the productions of the Theban bard. In two circumstances, however, there exists a prominent difference between them. The odes of Pindar are distinguished for the frequency of the moral sentiments which he draws from his subject, in the shape of short and proverbial sayings; and which he delivers in a kind of axiomatical form. It is not necessary to say how distinct this is, from that species of moral pathos which I mentioned before as existing in the poetry of Gray. The ancient bard never seems to miss any opportunity afforded by his subject, of extracting some ethical precept from it; something in praise of the bounty of kings, of piety to the gods, or of justice to men. Lord Bacon has not missed the notice of this peculiarity. —"Animos hominum, [Pindarus] sententiolâ aliquâ mirabili, veluti virgulâ divinâ percutit." This arose partly from the nature of the Grecian ode, which was considered as a composition of a religious nature, and which was framed in honour of gods and heroes, and whose duty it was to recommend piety and praise;*

* Τῆς Μουσικῆς ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἀναστρεφόμενης ἐν οἷς τιμήν τε τοῦ θείου, διὰ ταύτης ἐποιοῦντο, καὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐπαίνους. Plutarch. de Musica, p. 663, ed. Wyttenbach. "All the ideas (as Gray says in his notes to the republic of Plato) the Greeks had of the gods were borrowed from the poets." vol. ii. p. 427, ed. Mathias.

Ἀθανάτους μὲν πρῶτα θέους, νόμῳ ὡς διάκεινται
Τίμα,—ἔπειθ' Ἥρωας ἀγανούς.

Pythag. Aur. Carm.

and partly from the natural disposition of the poet's mind, which loved to indulge in a kind of severe or pensive morality, changing at times into enthusiastic animation, loftiness of sentiment, or beauty of description. We find these same features displayed in the choral odes of the Greek tragedy: and from a want of judgment in the imitation of the Greek tragedians, the plays that pass under the name of Seneca, are, in many parts, a heap of declamatory sentiments and moral aphorisms. As Horace, in his imitation of Pindar, often followed his example in the loose and defective connexions of the subject; so he by no means neglected to copy this peculiarity in his great predecessor. Though much of this moral reflection the poets undoubtedly borrowed from the Schools* of Philosophy; yet it is

* Hurd attributes the frequency of the *moral* sentences, in the writings of the ancient poets, to the influence of the Schools of Philosophy. See his notes on Horace, vol. i. p. 175. "As they had been more or less conversant, in the Academy, would be their relish of this moral mode, as is clearly seen in the case of Euripides, that Philosopher of the Stage, as the Athenians called him; and who is characterized by Quinctilian as "sententiis densior, et in iis quæ a sapientibus tradita sunt, pæne ipsis par." Hurd has well distinguished the peculiar *moral* character of the chorus, which, he says, "was rather political and popular, than legal and philosophic." See his note, vol. i. p. 154. The most singular instance, in modern times, of a tragic fable

also to be observed, that in the early poetry of most nations, before it has ceased to be the direct means of information as well as of pleasure, this sententiousness naturally takes place. Heinsius, in his Dissertation on Tragedy, where he is endeavouring to discover by internal evidence, the time in which the different plays were written, that all pass under the name of Seneca, says, "jam *locorum* major suppellex in Lucio Seneca; quæ res mire *antiquitatem sapit.*" Every opportunity is seized to instruct, as well as to please. Poets are not only the first historians, but the first moralists. They not only relate the action, but they unfold its motive, and scrutinize its end.

being founded on recent events, for a *moral* purpose, was that of the tragedy on the Death of Henry IVth, acted at Paris, a few months after that event took place, before his son and successor Louis XIIIth, where he is represented as a personage in the drama, made to complain, that study was prejudicial to him, that a book gave him the head-ache, and that a drum was the cure. Du Bos gives a singular reason why dramas, in which kings and queens are represented, cannot be taken from modern times; because the Sovereign Houses in our days, *are so connected* by *intermarriage*, that it would be impossible to exhibit upon the stage a prince who had reigned within an hundred years, in any neighbouring kingdom, in which the sovereign of the country would not find a *relation*. See Réflex. sur la Poësie, &c. vol. i. chap. 20. See A. Smith's Wealth of Nations, vol. ii. p. 352. Sir P. Sidney on Poetry. Jones, Præl. Poes. Asiat. p. 332. Louth. Præl. Academ. p. 37, 234. Robertson's View of the State of Europe, p. 88. Hume's Essays, vol. ii. p. 202.

——" Fuit hæc sapientia quondam,
Publica privatis secernere, sacra profanis;
Concubitu prohibere vago, dare jura maritis;
Oppida moliri, leges incidere ligno.
Sic honor, et nomen divinis vatibus, atque
Carminibus venit——"

Chaucer introduces many lines of this nature into the humour of his poems; and he distinguishes his friend and contemporary by the appellation of the 'Moral Gower.'* Much of the Gnomic poetry of the Greek writers was composed by the elder poets; and Quinctilian mentions, that the elder Latin poets abounded with this sententious kind of writing. "Tragediæ scriptores, Accius, et Pacuvius, clarissimi gravitate sententiarum." † When philosophy and history took the province of instruction, poetry assumed, as its appropriate and primary purpose, the production of pleasure. At least, instruction became not a necessary part of the province of poetry and only used as a means of pleasure, ‡ as it

* Gower and Chaucer may not unaptly be called the Hesiod and Homer of English poetry. If we take from Hesiod all that does not belong to him, we should then bring the genius of the two poets nearly on an equality.

† See Quinctilian, Inst. Orat. lib. x. cap. 1. And Athenæus, lib. xv. cap. 14. And consult Sir W. Temple's Observations on Poetry.

‡ The object of the philosopher is to inform and enlighten mankind: that of the orator, to acquire an ascendant over the will of others, by bending to his own purposes their judgment, their imaginations, and their passions: but the primary and the distinguishing aim of the *poet*, is to *please*; and the principal resource which he possesses for that pur-

was conveyed with peculiar attraction; with harmony of style, and beauty of description. In this respect, then, it was judicious in the English poet, when he formed his ode after the Pindaric model, not to follow that peculiarity, the introduction of which depended upon the age in which the Grecian bard lived; as well as upon his own particular habits of thought, and on the genius and disposition of the people among whom he wrote; I observe, that the learned editor of the Heraclidæ of Euripides,* has taken notice of this peculiarity in the Greek drama, in a note which he has written on the speech of Macaria (ver. 501). It abounds with moral re-

pose, is by addressing the imagination. D. Stewart's Elem. of the Philos. of the Human Mind, 8vo, p. 497. On the idea that *utility* and *instruction* are the end of poetry, and not *pleasure*; the reader is referred to a note in Mr. Twining's Aristotle, p. 561.

* So remarkable was Euripides for the frequency and the fulness of his moral sentiments, that it was said Socrates assisted him with reflections and observations, drawn from his knowledge of human nature. Alluding to this, Callias, in the comedy called the Πεδηται, makes some one say to Euripides,

Ἤδη σὺ σεμνῆ, καὶ φρονεῖς οὕτω μέγα.

To which he answers,

Ἔξεστι γὰρ μοὶ. Σωκράτης γὰρ αἴτιος.

And see Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 13. See Nares's Essays, vol. ii. p. 202, on the Moral Sentences of Euripides, he considers them as the maxims of Philosophers, published on the stage in a popular form. On the *Sententiæ* of Sophocles, consult Martini Var. Lect. p. 115.

flections, suited to the occasion; and which he compares with other speeches of the same nature in the Iphigenia and Hecuba. "Omnes (he says) *locis communibus* refertæ sunt, quarum multo patientiores fuerunt Athenienses quam nostri homines." This observation might very properly be extended beyond the province of the drama: for, indeed, the Athenians were not only patient of this moral instruction, but placed it in a very eminent rank. It was not unknown in painting, as well as poetry, and the noblest among the ancient artists were the painters of manners, the Ἠθογράφοι. Aristides Thebanus is omnium primum *Animum* pinxit, et sensus omnes expressit quos vocant Græci Ethe.* It was the advice of Aristotle, in his Politics, (lib. viii. c. 5,) to those who had the care of youth, that only pictures, that had a moral tendency, should be seen by them; and especially the pictures of Polygnotus. Plato also makes a similar remark:† Δεῖ μὴ τὰ ΠΑΥΣΩΝΟΣ, θεωρεῖν τοῦς νέους, ἄλλα τὸν ΠΟΛΥΓΝΩΤΟΝ κ' ἄν εἶ τὶς ἄλλος τῶν γραφέων, ἢ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων ἔστιν ἤθικος.

To conclude this branch of the subject, when it is said that instruction forms a part of the province of poetry, it should be understood that *moral* instruction is meant: *that* instruction which is most generally interesting, and most important in its nature, "quod magis ad nos pertinet, et nescire

* Vide Plinii N. Hist. Lib. xxxv. c. 10.

† Vide Platonem de Republ. viii. 5.

malum est;" and which, in the language of Harris,* is that master-knowledge, without which all other knowledge will prove of little or no utility. This is what Horace calls,

> "Speciosa locis, morataque recte—
> Fabula—"

"a fable abounding with moral reflection, and where the manners are properly expressed." And thus (to use the words of Sir Philip Sidney), "Mistress Philosophy will very often borrow the masking raiment of Poesy. For even those hard-hearted evil men who think virtue a school-name, and know no other good but "indulgere genio," and therefore despise the austere admonitions of the philosopher, and feel not the inward reason they stand upon; yet will be content to be delighted, which is all the good fellow poet seems to promise; and so steal to see the form of goodness; which seen, they cannot but love, ere themselves be aware." The intention of conveying knowledge in arts and sciences, through the medium of poetry, has seldom proved successful, and the genius of the poet, as Scaliger says of Claudian, will be "ignobiliori materia depressus."

I hardly need observe, that the transitions in Gray are of a different nature from those in Pindar. The difference arises partly from the license

* See Harris's Three Essays, p. 85, 8vo. and Trappii Prælect. Poet, p. 60, and Irving's Life of Buchanan, p. 242.

assumed by the Grecian poet, and partly from the nature of his subjects. The transitions in Pindar are such as he makes in departing from his original subject, to a field more fruitful of ornament, and productive of pleasure.* The forgetfulness of the peculiar circumstances under which the Pindaric odes were written, misled our English writers, who possessed the command of their subject-matter, but who still took advantage of the license in which their predecessor had indulged. In the irregularity of the metre, in the epigrammatic and quaint manner of expression, in their witty and subtle associations, and in their harsh and dissonant numbers, these Pindaric odes were most dissimilar to their original. It must however be observed, before I quit this subject, that many later odes of this kind have failed from the very reverse of this objection, namely, from having little or no transi-

* Dr. Warton says, that the character of Pindar (as commonly taken) seems not to be well understood. "We hear nothing but of the impetuosity and the sublimity of his manner; whereas he abounds in strokes of domestic tenderness." (Warton on Pope, i. p. 389.) This is true; but Horace had fully remarked it:

> "Flebili sponsæ, juvenemve raptum
> Plorat; et vires animumque mores-
> Que aureos educit in astra, nigro-
> Que invidet Orco." Od. IV. ii. 21.

On the *austere* style of Pindar, and Gray's Ode to Adversity, see Huntingford's Apology for the Monostrophies, p. 47, on the *Transitions* of Pindar, see Sir W. Jones on Eastern Poetry.

tion; the thoughts being preserved in a regular and philosophical connection, by which the poem takes the cast of a narrative, and loses all the spirit and strength which arises from the sudden contrast in matter and numbers from the rapid and various changes, from the fine transitions, and from the bold and frequent personifications peculiar to the lyrical style. In rank next, and only next, to the poems of Gray, must be placed the odes of Collins: and indeed, as I have before observed, Collins caught, in an eminent degree, the sublimity of conception, and grandeur of style, peculiar to the father of the ancient drama.*

VI. I have only a few words to say concerning the notes to this edition of Gray. Their primary purpose is to lay before the reader either the intentional and direct imitations in the Poems of Gray; as in The Progress of Poetry;

"The dauntless child
Stretch'd forth its little arms, and smil'd;"

from Sandys;

"——— the child
Stretch'd forth its little arms, and on him smil'd."†

And in The Hymn to Adversity;

* I cannot agree with the author of the article, (Edinb. Rev. No. xcv. Sept. 1828, p. 49.) when he says of Collins, 'That he was a great master of delicate and fine diction, though poor in thought and matter.'

† I may remark in what a fine manner Gray has made

"Whose iron scourge, and torturing hour;"

from Milton;

"———When the scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour."

Or else to mark those indirect imitations, in which the image bears a very strong resemblance to that used by another poet, as in the Elegy;

"Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries;"

from the Anthologia;

"Crede mihi vires aliquas Natura sepulchris
Adhibuit, tumulos vindicat umbra suos."

Or, thirdly, to trace an allusion, either in subject or style, made to ancient customs or expressions; to open the sources from which the poet ornamented the productions of his fancy; to shew the materials which he connected for new combinations and fresh imagery; and to elucidate the allusions which he remotely made to the idioms, phrases, and images of foreign writers. The very first lines of the poem on the Spring, for instance, abound with allusions to the expressions of the ancient poets:*

the *general* picture of a child smiling, and stretching out its hands, in this instance *appropriate*, by the epithet "dauntless," and how admirably it characterizes the infant genius of Shakespeare.

* From Meleager's Hymn to Spring, see Sir W. Jones' Poes. Asiat. p. 410.

"Lo! where the *rosy-bosom'd Hours*,
Fair *Venus' train*, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the *purple year!*
The *Attic warbler pours her throat*," &c.

The propriety and beauty of the expressions in these lines depend upon the reference which we make to the ancient authors who have used them. To the mere English writer, some must appear inapplicable, as "*purple* year;" and others unintelligible, as "Attic warbler." The whole of the stanza has, indeed, quite the air of a Grecian hymn or ode: and might have been sung with propriety by an ancient poet, who was beholding an Athenian landscape brightening in the spring. Considered as a mere piece of English scenery, I think some of the images not peculiarly appropriate; and perhaps, the expression 'purple year' is too florid and luxuriant, for anything but the splendour of an Asiatic vegetation.* But not to dwell on this trivial objection; perhaps the allusions to the ancient mythology with which the poem opens, might have been kept in view throughout; instead of being almost entirely confined to the commencement; and, on the whole, I have always thought there was a little defect in the change of scenery and expression which takes place in this

* See Sir W. Jones' description of an Asiatic Spring in his Prælect. Poes. As. p. 6, and its effect on the language of Poetry.

ode at the close of the first stanza. The charm, indeed, which is produced by the occasional insertion of a classical image, or an allusion to the mythology of the ancients; the associations which it brings with it, and the interesting picture which it creates in the mind, is too evident to require any proof. When, for instance, in the Hymn to Adversity, we meet with that fine invocation:

> "Oh! gently on thy suppliant's head,
> Dread goddess, lay thy chast'ning hand!
> Not in thy *Gorgon* terrors clad,
> Not circled with the vengeful band"—

what single epithet, what attribute could the poet have given to Terror, which could have produced an effect equal to that of this image? Do we not immediately behold the figure of the goddess;

> "Horrentem colubris, vultuque tremendam,
> *Gorgoneo;*"—

and do we not reflect upon a period, when this image was not considered merely as part of an elegant fable, or as an ingenious personification: but when it brought with it the impression of its real presence, which was felt; and of its supernatural power, which was revered?

When an *allusion*, and not an *imitation*, is intended to be pointed out, it is not always of consequence from what author, or what particular passage, the resemblance is drawn; and therefore it cannot be objected, that the *one* allusion which I

have marked, is needless; because many *others* equally obvious could be brought from various quarters. An *imitation* perhaps must be confined to one or two passages; but an *allusion* may be illustrated by many. It surely forms also a pleasing branch of criticism, to trace coincidences of thought between writers of genius; to see what particular taste has added to general expression; and to observe, how a graceful idiom, or a noble image, has been altered or enlarged by each succeeding poet; what new and unexpected lights have been cast by the fancy of one author, on the suggestions of another; and how a thought, by gradual expansion, or sudden addition, is at length perfected. We may thus perceive from what slender associations, from what faint images and occasional turns of expression, a train of thought may shoot across the mind of the poet, and opening and enlarging itself, and gaining accessions of strength from all which the genius and learning of the mind can supply, at length appear with a lustre and beauty that never belonged to it in its early state, and under its original possessor. In this manner we may form a correct notion how fine the fruit of native genius will be, when it is assisted by the wisdom of others: and when the poet, while indulging in a patient and liberal enquiry into the opinions of the enlightened, still preserves a consciousness of his own independence of thought, and of his native and original strength.—"Poetry (says Milton)

is the art of expert judgment, and the final work of a head filled by long reading and observing, with elegant maxims and copious invention."*

It will hardly be necessary, after what I have said, to take notice of the opinions of those, who think the fame of the poet lessened as the imitations, coincidences, or allusions are pointed out, and that his original genius is depreciated by exhibiting the quantity of his acquired materials. It may be asked, however, if the reputation of Shakespeare or Milton has been at all diminished, by the illustrations collected by the industry of their commentators.† I remember when an opinion of this nature was once urged against Milton; and when it was asserted that the chief part of the materials which he used in his Paradise Lost, belonged to other

* See the observations of la Bruyere, vol. iii. p. 193, ed. Cazin.

† See Hurd on Imitation, vol. iii. p 39, 137. Censura Liter. vol. vii. p. 317. Pope's Letters, (Curl's ed.) vol. i. p. 57. The French Poets would seem to allow themselves an unusual license in this respect: "Molière prenoit quelquefois des scènes entières dans Cyrano de Bergerac, et disoit: Cette scène est bonne, elle m'appartient de droit, je reprend mon bien, partout ou je le trouve." V. Portefeuille de Voltaire, ii. 32. J'oubliai le dire que j'ai pris deux vers, dans l'Œdipe de Corneille, je n'ai point fait scrupule de voler ses deux vers, parceque ayant précisément la même chose à dire que Corneille, il m'ètoit impossible de l' exprimer mieux, et j'ai mieux aimé de donner deux bons vers de lui que d'en donner deux mauvais de moi.—Voltaire de lui même, ed. p. 57.

poets; the late Professor Porson, who was present, strenuously repelled the justice of the accusation; and, repeating the noble exordium of the third book, a passage which is at once pathetic and sublime in the highest degree, he asked to whom Milton was indebted for this fine example of the most perfect poetry. Nec aliud magis, (says a most elegant and finished scholar) ad Lucretii commendationem pertinet, quam quod Virgilius, tantus Poeta, illum tanti fecit, ut integros ejus versus, vix literis mutatis, in Carmina sua transferat.* As far as my opinion is concerned, I must say that the *original genius* of Gray appears to me to be of the very highest order; and that the combination of his images and the application of them to his subject, is at once the result of the profoundest thought, the finest taste, and the most creative imagination. A person, however, who still entertains sentiments of this kind, will do well, before he decides too positively on the want of originality in this, or that writer, to read what Sir Joshua Reynolds has written on this subject with regard to painting; and especially where he treats of the imitations of Raphael. I shall here content myself with transcribing one short passage from one of his Discourses.† "It is indisputably evident (he says) that

* V. Ruhnkenii Ep. Crit. p. 201. On the imitations of Horace from the Greek, see Warton on Pope, ii. 349. Huntingford's Monostroph. p. 93. Martini Var. Lect. p. 104.

† See Sir J. Reynolds's Discourses, vol. i. p. 28, ed. Ma-

a great part of every man's life must be employed in collecting materials for the exercise of genius. Invention, strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and deposited in the memory. Nothing can come of nothing. He who has laid up no materials, can produce no combinations. The more extensive therefore your acquaintance with the works of those who have excelled, the more extensive will be your powers of invention; and, what may appear still more a paradox, the more original will be your conception."

It may be remarked, that proficiency in the language, as in all other parts of poetry, must be acquired by study alone. In no case can it be called a gift, or sudden inspiration. The poet, like the prose-writer,* must take his words, as well as ideas from the writings of others. He will watch that slow, but perpetual change, that is always taking place in language; and his taste will enable him to decide, what he may draw from the recesses of antiquity, as well as reject, what, however good in itself, has been sullied by injudicious use, and

lone. If any apology should be necessary for quoting so often the discourses of a *painter*, to illustrate the sister-art of *poetry*, I should shelter myself under the remark of Mr. Harris; that the *Stagirite* often illustrates his poetic ideas from painting. See Philological Inquiries, p. 208.

* See Hume's Essay on the Rise of the Arts and Sciences, xvii. p. 160, ed. London, 12mo. and Wordsworth's Preface to his Lyrical Ballads.

weakened by constant repetition. It is also to be observed, that the notes of commentators are chiefly confined to the phraseology of the poet; because, imitations of *expression* are much more easily traced, than imitations of *thought*. Of course, a poet like Spenser or Milton, though he may borrow much in his expression, may show great genius in the other constituents of his art, in the invention of the fable, in the disposition of the parts, in the framing of the characters, in the connexion and dependence of the incidents, in the loftiness of his conceptions, in the power of commanding all that is pathetic or sublime, and in the management and conduct of the whole poem, τοῖς Ἤθεσιν ἀκριβοῦν, ἢ τὰ Πράγματα συνίστασθαι. The judgment, therefore, of the poet's originality from his *diction* alone, of course, must be fallacious. Every poet has some particular province of the art to which he attributes the greatest charms, and pays the chief attention. Though the phraseology be particularly studied by one, it is comparatively neglected by another;* while something of greater importance in his eyes, supplies its room. We should know, for instance, what occupied the attention of Milton, by observing

* Enfin, voulez-vous que je vous dise franchement mon petit sentiment sur M. M. de la Motte, et Rousseau; M. de la M. pense beaucoup, et ne travaille par assez ses vers. Rousseau ne pense gueres, mais il travaille ses vers beaucoup mieux, le point seroit de trouver un poete qui pensoit comme la Motte, et qui écrivit comme Rousseau. v. Portef. de Voltaire, vol. i. p. 258.

the varied harmony, the inverted language, the flowing periods, and the foreign phraseology of the poem. In Dryden we should remark the power with which he commands all the native sources of the English language, the masculine vigour of his lines, the diversity of his idioms, the richness of his numbers, and the variety and beauty of his expression.* In Thomson, though on the one hand we should feel the heaviness and monotony of his versification, arising from his ignorance or neglect of the true structure of blank verse, yet we should find even *that* often giving way to the strength and vigour of his genius: we should admire that significant and emphatical language, which, at one touch, forms and completes the picture he intended to create; the promptitude with which his genius seizes upon the decisive parts of the composition, the vividness of his colouring, and the originality of his observation. The great harmony of Akenside's versification, we should find, was to be attributed to the frequency of the pause at the end of an unequal foot of the verse, particularly the seventh.

* See Dryden's account of his own style, in the Preface to Don Sebastian, vol. iii. p. 186, ed. Malone; where he speaks of "some newnesses of English, translated from the beauties of Modern Tongues, as well as from the elegancies from the Latin; and here and there, some old words are sprinkled, which, for their significance and sound, deserve not to be antiquated, such as we often find in Sallust among the Roman authors; and in Milton's Paradise, amongst ours."

The position of this pause was as much attended to, and admired by him, as that on the eighth foot by Milton, and the Hymn to the Naiads,* derives its chief harmony from this cause. In the poems of Goldsmith, we should acknowledge amidst some weakness of language and thought, what appear to be the artless, and the natural graces of composition. The subject, the phrase, the simple flow of the verse, the choice of images, the beautiful transitions, the sweet pathetic vein that runs through his poetry, and perhaps the very carelessness in the recurrence of the same rhyme, contribute to form a style of poetry by many preferred to that of any other; and able indeed to delight and refresh the mind with the softness of its thoughts, and the easiness of its expression.† Lastly, we

* As in the following lines:

——" O'er ev'ry clime
Send tribute to their parents; | and from them
Are ye, O Naiads; | Arethusa fair,
And tuneful Aganippe; | that sweet name
Bandusia; | that soft family that dwelt
With Syrian Daphne | and the hallow'd tribes
Beloved of Pæon. | Listen to my strain,
Daughters of Tethys, | listen to your praise."

These pauses are all on unequal feet; on the 7th, 5th, 7th, 3rd, 5th, 5th, 5th. For a curious mixture of *Blank verse and Rhyme*, see Roscommon's Transl. of Horace's Art of Poetry.

† It has always appeared to me, that the frequent recurrence of the same rhymes in Goldsmith, was intended to assist the natural and unstudied appearance of his poetry;

might trace the effect, which the greatest skill in select and ornamented language, exquisite attention to the euphony and harmony of verse, judicious personification of abstract terms peculiarly adapted to lyrical composition, highly-wrought metaphorical language, and splendid and sublime imagery, have produced in lyric poetry, when directed by the genius of Gray. He, therefore, who should attempt to take a critical review of the English poets, and form his decision of the originality of their powers from any one principle or application of their art, would, of course, egregiously fail in his estimation of their general character. Of poetry it may be said, as Quinctilian said of oratory: "Plures sunt eloquentiæ facies; sed stultissimum est quærere, ad quam recturus se sit orator, cum omnis species, quæ modo recta est, habeat usum."

VII. It may be thought necessary to say something to the admirers of Gray, concerning the silence which is held on Dr. Johnson's criticisms on the poet. This has proceeded from the conviction that most of the particular objections, all indeed of

at least, it possesses that effect. Atterbury praises Waller for his rhymes being not only good, but new: and Dr. Warton remarks, that "we have compositions where new and uncommon rhymes are introduced. One or two writers, however, I cannot forbear mentioning, who have been studious of this beauty. They are Parnell, Pitt in his translation of Vida, West in his Pindar, Thomson in his Castle of Indolence." Essay on Pope, vol. i. p. 149.

any importance, have long since been answered by those,* who wrote with that avowed intention. What remain, are rather general objections, often unsupported by arguments, and which have lost much of their weight, since the prejudice and partialities of their author have been acknowledged. The observations of Dr. Johnson on the poetry of Gray, bear few marks of severe scrutiny, or mature decision; but seem rather the productions of a mind deeply prejudiced against the poetry of the author; loosely scattering expressions of dislike and contempt; anxious to find objections, and careless of the grounds on which they were founded. Under this impression, all the talents and acuteness of Dr. Johnson must fail in commanding our confidence, in the stability of his criticism. We shall look in vain for that openness, and candour, which can make the most searching remarks, of service both to the author, and the reader; and we have no hesitation in saying, that his is not the severity of the judge, but the misrepresentation of the adver-

* Mr. Potter, the translator of Æschylus, Mr. Fitzthomas, (see A. Seward's Letters, ii. p. 148), 'A Yorkshire Freeholder,' Mr. G. Wakefield, Mr. P. Stockdale; not to mention the publication of Professor Young of Glasgow, and Monthly Review, (Greathead's Poems) 1796, vol. ii. p. 101. Mr. Tindal, Author of the Hist. of Evesham, wrote Strictures or Remarks on Johnson's Life, and Critical Observ. on the Works of Gray, 1782, a work of which I have heard the late Bp. Hurd said: "It was the best defence he had ever seen against the attacks of that Goliath of Literature."

sary.* Dr. Johnson, however, did not stand single in his expressions of dislike to the poetry of Gray. Goldsmith, I have heard, spoke of it in terms of great contempt in his familiar conversation; and alluded to it in the same manner, in the preface to his edition of Parnell.† But if we suppose that Dr. Johnson and others were *not prejudiced* against the poetry of their contemporary, it remains then only to presume, that they did not esteem or feel

* It is fair to confute a critic from his own writings. The two following passages will perhaps shew how much the same person differs from himself, when an author and a critic.—On the Ode to Eton College, Dr. Johnson says, "The Prospect of Eton College suggests nothing to Gray, which every beholder does not equally think and feel. *His supplication to Father Thames, to tell him* who drives the hoop or tosses the ball, is useless and puerile. *Father Thames had no better means of knowing than himself.*"—Are we by this rule of criticism to judge the following passage, in the twentieth chapter of Rasselas? "As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her: '*Answer*,' said she, '*great Father of Waters*, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, *to the invocation* of the daughter of thy native king. *Tell me, if thou waterest*, through all thy course, a single habitation, from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint.'" If the reader is now desirous to see the critic criticized by the author, he may turn to Walpole's Works, vol. v. p. 394, and find Gray's opinion of Dr. Johnson's Translation of Juvenal; and which passage I have quoted in the Life.

† See the Life of Parnell, p. xxviii. Goldsmith does not mention Gray by name; but it is well known that he alluded to him. "Parnell is happy in the selection of his images, and scrupulously careful in the choice of his sub-

the beauties of that species of composition, in which the genius of Gray delighted. Dr. Johnson certainly most admired that kind of poetry, in which he himself so eminently excelled; and which, like the works of Dryden, contained sound sense, quick and ready observation, and moral eloquence, in fine harmonious couplets;* without borrowing much embellishment from the fancy, or much sublimity from the imagination. In the Lives of the Poets, the school of Dryden and Pope, the school of strong sense, shrewd wit, close expression, is every where admired; while the beautiful imagery, pathetic sentiment, and magnificent creations of the lyric muse, as displayed in the poems of Gray, or of Collins, are slighted and depressed. I could not believe, that Dr. Johnson so severely and unjustly

jects. His productions bear no resemblance to those tawdry things which it has for some time been the fashion to admire; in writing which, the poet sits down without any plan, and heaps up splendid images without any selection; when the reader grows dizzy with praise and admiration, and yet soon grows weary, he can scarce tell why." This alludes, I believe, to the Elegy; and there is much more of this reflection in the preface, which it is hardly worth while to transcribe, as the book is very common in which it is to be found. See also the Vicar of Wakefield. "There is a severe censure thrown on the Elegy, in a collection which Goldsmith published under the title of the Beauties of English Poetry; I remember, when I was young, to have heard Goldsmith converse on several subjects of Literature, and make some oblique and severe reflections on the fashionable Poetry." Knox's Essays, vii. p. 188.

* See Warton on Pope, vol. i. p. 173.

criticized what he sincerely admired; but I think, that he might feel some degree of spleen, in hearing others extol, what he could not approve; and enjoy, what he was not capable of relishing; and it happened in this, as in most cases of a similar nature, that an opposition of sentiments occasioned a warmth of expression; and the more he heard the poems of Gray approved, the more closely he clung to his own opinions; and more severely expressed his contempt of his adversaries; by lowering, in the eyes of the public, the Bard whom they looked up to with admiration and delight.

It is perhaps almost unnecessary to observe, that he who peruses the Lives of the Poets by Dr. Johnson, will certainly discover in them the same marks of that great writer's penetration and sagacity which distinguished the productions of his earlier years.* The same clearness of thought and profundity of judgment which he brought to the examination of all subjects critical and moral: and by which he was enabled to dispel much error and obscurity, even upon those questions which had not formed his favourite objects of enquiry, or been submitted to his accustomed investigation. He seldom indeed fails to inform, even where he is unable to persuade: and if he does not convince us of the general truth of his arguments, he at least instructs by the particular force of his rea-

* See his Prayers and Meditations, by A. Strahan, p. 198, 220, 12mo.

soning. But we shall be much disappointed, if we open these volumes with a hope of enjoying the calm result of an impartial judgment; or if we expect to find in them a just and connected code of poetical criticism, founded on enlarged principles, and accompanied with a candid and liberal investigation of the merits of those writers who pass in review before him; and we shall probably agree in the opinion of a writer, (who always accompanies his philosophical investigations with the most indulgent spirit of criticism,) when he says: "To myself (much as I admire his great and various merits both as a critic and a writer) human nature never appears in a more humiliating form than when I read his Lives of the Poets, a performance which exhibits a more faithful, expressive, and curious picture of the author, than all the portraits attempted by his biographers; and which in this point of view compensates fully by the *moral* lessons it may suggest, for the *critical* errors which it sanctions. The errors, alas! are not such as any one who has perused his imitations of Juvenal can place to the account of a bad taste, but such as had their root in weaknesses, which a noble mind would be still more unwilling to acknowledge.*"

* See Professor D. Stewart's Philosophical Essays, 4to. p. 491.

GRAY'S LETTERS.

GRAY'S LETTERS.

SECTION THE FIRST.

I. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

You use me very cruelly: you have sent me but one letter since I have been at Oxford, and that too agreeable not to make me sensible how great my loss is in not having more. Next to seeing you is the pleasure of seeing your hand-writing; next to hearing you is the pleasure of hearing from you. Really and sincerely I wonder at you, that you thought it not worth while to answer my last letter. I hope this will have better success in behalf of your quondam school-fellow; in behalf of one who has walked hand in hand with you, like the two children in the wood,

> Thro' many a flow'ry path and shelly grot,
> Where learning lull'd us in her private* maze.

The very thought, you see, tips my pen with poetry, and brings Eton to my view. Consider

* This expression prettily distinguishes their studies when out of the public school, which would naturally, at their age, be vague and desultory.—*Mason.*

me very seriously here in a strange country, inhabited by things that call themselves Doctors and Masters of Arts; a country flowing with syllogisms and ale, where Horace and Virgil are equally unknown; consider me, I say, in this melancholy light, and then think if something be not due to yours.

Christ Church, Nov. 14, 1735.

P.S. I desire you will send me soon, and truly and positively,* a history of your own time.

II. MR. GRAY. TO MR. WEST.

Permit me again to write to you, though I have so long neglected my duty, and forgive my brevity, when I tell you it is occasioned wholly by the hurry I am in to get to a place where I expect to meet with no other pleasure than the sight of you; for I am preparing for London in a few days at furthest. I do not wonder in the least at your frequent blaming my indolence, it ought rather to be called ingratitude, and I am obliged to your goodness for softening so harsh an appellation. When we meet it will, however, be my greatest of pleasures to know what you do, what you read, and how you spend your time, &c. &c. and to tell you what I do not read, and how I do

* Alluding to his grandfather, Bishop Burnet's history.

not, &c. for almost all the employment of my hours may be best explained by negatives; take my word and experience upon it, doing nothing is a most amusing business; and yet neither something nor nothing gives me any pleasure. When you have seen one of my days, you have seen a whole year of my life; they go round and round like the blind horse in the mill, only he has the satisfaction of fancying he makes a progress and gets some ground; my eyes are open enough to see the same dull prospect, and to know that having made four-and-twenty steps more, I shall be just where I was; I may, better than most people, say my life is but a span, were I not afraid lest you should not believe that a person so short-lived could write even so long a letter as this; in short, I believe I must not send you the history of my own time, till I can send you that also of the reformation.* However, as the most undeserving people in the world must sure have the vanity to wish somebody had a regard for them, so I need not wonder at my own, in being pleased that you care about me. You need not doubt, therefore, of having a first row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there; it is asking you to an old play, indeed, but you will be candid

* Carrying on the allusion to the other history written by Mr. West's grandfather.—*Mason.*

enough to excuse the whole piece for the sake of a few tolerable lines.

For this little while past I have been playing with Statius; we yesterday had a game at quoits together; you will easily forgive me for having broke his head, as you have a little pique to him. I send you my translation* which I did not engage in because I liked that part of the Poem, nor do I now send it to you because I think it deserves it, but merely to shew you how I mispend my days.

* * * *

Cambridge, May 8, 1736.

III. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

I AGREE with you that you have broke Statius's head, but it is in like manner as Apollo broke Hyacinth's, you have foiled him infinitely at his own weapon: I must insist on seeing the rest of your translation, and then I will examine it entire, and compare it with the Latin, and be very wise and severe, and put on an inflexible face, such as becomes the character of a true son of Aristarchus, of hypercritical memory. In the mean while,

> And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold,

Is exactly Statius—Summos auro mansueverat ungues. I never knew before that the golden

* Here followed the Translation of Statius.

fangs on hammercloths were so old a fashion. Your Hymenêal* I was told was the best in the Cambridge Collection before I saw it, and, indeed, it is no great compliment to tell you I thought it so when I had seen it, but sincerely it pleased me best. Methinks the college bards have run into a strange taste on this occasion. Such soft unmeaning stuff about Venus and Cupid, and Peleus and Thetis, and Zephyrs and Dryads, was never read. As for my poor little Eclogue, it has been condemned and beheaded by our Westminster judges; an exordium of about sixteen lines absolutely cut off, and its other limbs quartered in a most barbarous manner. I will send it you in my next as my true and lawful heir, in exclusion of the pretender, who has the impudence to appear under my name.

* Published in the Cambridge Collection of verses on the Prince of Wales's marriage. I have not thought it necessary to insert these hexameters, as adulatory verses of this kind, however well written, deserve not to be transmitted to posterity; and, indeed, are usually buried, as they ought to be, in the trash with which they are surrounded. Every person, who feels himself a poet, ought to be above prostituting his powers on such occasions; and extreme youth (as was the case with Mr. Gray) is the only thing that can apologize for his having done it.—*Mason.*———To this note, by Mr. Mason, I must add, that there is not the slightest shade of adulation or 'courtly incense' discoverable in the verses alluded to; except it may be found in the Poet likening Princess Augusta to a stone statue, and Prince Frederick to Pygmalion.—*Ed.*

As yet I have not looked into Sir Isaac. Public disputations I hate; mathematics I reverence; history, morality, and natural philosophy have the greatest charms in my eye; but who can forget poetry? they call it idleness, but it is surely the most enchanting thing in the world, "ac dulce otium et pœne omni negotio pulchrius." I am, dear sir, yours while I am R. W.

Christ Church, May 24, 1736.

[The following letter seems to require some little preface, not so much as it expresses Mr. Gray's juvenile sentiments concerning the mode of our academical education, as that these sentiments prevailed with him through life, and that he often declared them, with so little reserve, as to create him many enemies. It is certain that at the time when he was admitted, and for some years after, Jacobitism, and its concomitant hard drinking, prevailed still at Cambridge, much to the prejudice not only of good manners but of good letters; for, if this spirit was then on the decline, it was not extinguished till after the year 1745. But we see (as was natural enough in a young man) he laid the blame rather on the mode of education than the mode of the times; and to this error the uncommon proficiency he had made at Eton in classical learning might contribute, as he found himself in a situation where that species of merit held not the first rank. However this be,

it was necessary not to omit this feature of his mind, when employed in drawing a general likeness of it; and what colours could be found so forcible as his own to express its true light and shadow? I would further observe, that whatever truth there might be in his satire at the time it was written, it can by no means affect the present state of the university. There is usually a much greater fluctuation of taste and manners in an academical, than a national body; occasioned (to use a scholastic metaphor) by that very quick succession of its component parts, which often goes near to destroy its personal identity. Whatever therefore may be true of such a society at one time, may be, and generally is, ten years after absolutely false.]—*Mason.*

IV. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

You must know that I do not take degrees, and, after this term, shall have nothing more of college impertinences to undergo, which I trust will be some pleasure to you, as it is a great one to me. I have endured lectures daily and hourly since I came last, supported by the hopes of being shortly at full liberty to give myself up to my friends and classical companions, who, poor souls! though I see them fallen into great contempt with

most people here, yet I cannot help sticking to them, and out of a spirit of obstinacy (I think) love them the better for it; and indeed, what can I do else? Must I plunge into metaphysics? Alas, I cannot see in the dark; nature has not furnished me with the optics of a cat. Must I pore upon mathematics?* Alas, I cannot see in too much light; I am no eagle. It is very possible that two and two make four, but I would

* The reader must consider the spirit of humour in which this letter is written, before he regards these sentiments familiarly thrown out to his correspondent, as the mature or settled opinions of Gray, on the science of mathematics. "Mr. Gray (says Mr. Mathias) much regretted that he had never applied his mind to the study of the mathematics; and once, rather late in life, he hinted to his friend an intention to undertake it. No one was ever more convinced of its dignity and its importance. He wished, however, to appreciate it with discreet approbation, not considering it as the only mode by which the understanding could be matured: as he conceived that a fixed attention to any works of close and of deep reasoning might produce the same accurate precision of thought. But he felt, and he owned it too, the commanding power of those speculations, to which the mathematician alone can conduct the patient inquirers into nature. And he could not but admire the strong and animated expressions of Halley,—

——————"Nubem pellente Mathesi,
Claustra patent Cœli, rerumque immobilis ordo."

While he contemplated, with reverence, the laws and the system of the universe fixed by a sublime geometry." See Mathias's Observations on Gray's Writings, page 68, 8vo.—*Ed.*

not give four farthings to demonstrate this ever so clearly; and if these be the profits of life, give me the amusements of it. The people I behold all around me, it seems, know all this and more, and yet I do not know one of them who inspires me with any ambition of being like him. Surely it was of this place, now Cambridge, but formerly known by the name of Babylon, that the prophet spoke when he said, "the wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall build there, and satyrs shall dance there; their forts and towers shall be a den for ever, a joy of wild asses; there shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch and gather under her shadow; it shall be a court of dragons; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest." You see here is a pretty collection of desolate animals, which is verified in this town to a tittle, and perhaps it may also allude to your habitation, for you know all types may be taken by abundance of handles; however, I defy your owls to match mine.

If the default of your spirits and nerves be nothing but the effect of the hyp, I have no more to say. We all must submit to that wayward queen; I too in no small degree own her sway,

I feel her influence while I speak her power.

But if it be a real distemper, pray take more care

you, and to give you a proof of it I have sent you an elegy* of Tibullus translated. Tibullus, you must know, is my favourite elegiac poet; for his language is more elegant and his thoughts more natural than Ovid's. Ovid excels him only in wit, of which no poet had more in my opinion. The reason I choose so melancholy a kind of poesie, is because my low spirits and constant ill health (things in me not imaginary, as you surmise, but too real alas! and, I fear, constitutional) "have tuned my heart to elegies of woe;" and this likewise is the reason why I am the most irregular thing alive at college, for you may depend upon it I value my health above what they call discipline. As for this poor unlicked thing of an elegy, pray criticise it unmercifully, for I send it with that intent. Indeed your late translation of Statius might have deterred me, but I know you are not more able to excel others, than you are apt to forgive the want of excellence, especially when it is found in the productions of your most sincere friend.

Christ Church, December 22, 1736.

* This I omit for the reason given in a preceding note, and for another also, because it is not written in alternate but heroic rhyme; which I think is not the species of English measure adapted to elegiac poetry.—*Mason.*

VI.* MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

You can never weary me with the repetition of any thing that makes me sensible of your kindness; since that has been the only idea of any social happiness that I have almost ever received, and which (begging your pardon for thinking so differently from you in such cases) I would by no means have parted with for an exemption from all the uneasiness mixed with it: but it would be unjust to imagine my taste was any rule for yours; for which reason my letters are shorter and less frequent than they would be, had I any materials but myself to entertain you with. Love and brown sugar must be a poor regale for one of your goût,

* Mr. Walpole, on my informing him that it was my intention to publish the principal part of Mr. Gray's correspondence with Mr. West, very obligingly communicated to me the letters which he had also received from Mr. Gray at the same period. From this collection I have selected such as I thought would be most likely to please the generality of readers; omitting, though with regret, many of the more sprightly and humorous sort, because either from their personality, or some other local circumstance, they did not seem so well adapted to hit the public taste. I shall say more upon this subject in a subsequent section, when I give my idea of Mr. Gray's peculiar vein of humour.—*Mason.*

and, alas! you know I am by trade a grocer.* Scandal (if I had any) is a merchandize you do not profess dealing in; now and then, indeed, and to oblige a friend, you may perhaps slip a little out of your pocket, as a decayed gentlewoman would a piece of right mecklin, or a little quantity of run tea, but this only now and then, not to make a practice of it. Monsters appertaining to this climate you have seen already, both wet and dry. So you perceive within how narrow bounds my pen is circumscribed, and the whole contents of my share in our correspondence may be reduced under the two heads of 1st, you, 2ndly, I; the first is, indeed, a subject to expatiate upon, but you might laugh at me for talking about what I do not understand; the second is so tiny, so tiresome, that you shall hear no more of it, than that it is ever yours.

Peterhouse, December 23, 1736.

* i. e. A man who deals only in coarse and ordinary wares: to these he compares the plain sincerity of his own friendship, undisguised by flattery; which, had he chosen to carry on the allusion, he might have termed the trade of a confectioner.—*Mason.*

VII. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

I HAVE been very ill, and am still hardly recovered. Do you remember Elegy V, Book III, of Tibullus, Vos Tenet, &c.; and do you remember a letter of Mr. Pope's, in sickness, to Mr. Steele? This melancholy elegy and this melancholy letter I turned into a more melancholy epistle of my own, during my sickness, in the way of imitation; and this I send to you and my friends at Cambridge, not to divert them, for it cannot, but merely to show them how sincere I was when sick; I hope my sending it to them now may convince them I am no less sincere, though perhaps more simple, when well.

AD AMICOS.*

Yes, happy youths, on Camus' sedgy side,
You feel each joy that friendship can divide;
Each realm of science and of art explore,
And with the ancient blend the modern lore.
Studious alone to learn whate'er may tend
To raise the genius or the heart to mend;
Now pleas'd along the cloister'd walk you rove,
And trace the verdant mazes of the grove,

* Almost all Tibullus's elegy is imitated in this little piece, from whence his transition to Mr. Pope's letter is very artfully contrived, and bespeaks a degree of judgment much beyond Mr. West's years.—*Mason.*

Where social oft, and oft alone, ye choose,
To catch the zephyr and to court the muse.
Mean time at me (while all devoid of art
These lines give back the image of my heart)
At me the power that comes or soon or late,
Or aims, or seems to aim, the dart of fate;
From you remote, methinks alone I stand
Like some sad exile in a desart land;
Around no friends their lenient care to join
In mutual warmth, and mix their heart with mine.
Or real pains, or those which fancy raise,
For ever blot the sunshine of my days;
To sickness still, and still to grief a prey,
Health turns from me her rosy face away.

Just heaven! what sin, ere life begins to bloom,
Devotes my head untimely to the tomb;
Did e'er this hand against a brother's life
Drug the dire bowl or point the murd'rous knife?
Did e'er this tongue the slanderer's tale proclaim,
Or madly violate my Maker's name?
Did e'er this heart betray a friend or foe,
Or know a thought but all the world might know?
As yet just started from the lists of time,
My growing years have scarcely told their prime;
Useless, as yet, through life I've idly run,
No pleasures tasted, and few duties done.
Ah, who, ere autumn's mellowing suns appear,
Would pluck the promise of the vernal year;
Or, ere the grapes their purple hue betray,
Tear the crude cluster from the mourning spray.
Stern power of fate, whose ebon sceptre rules
The Stygian deserts and Cimmerian pools,
Forbear, nor rashly smite my youthful heart,
A victim yet unworthy of thy dart;
Ah, stay till age shall blast my withering face,
Shake in my head, and falter in my pace;
Then aim the shaft, then meditate the blow,

*And to the dead my willing shade shall go.
How weak is Man to Reason's judging eye!
Born in this moment, in the next we die;
Part mortal clay, and part ethereal fire,
Too proud to creep, too humble to aspire.
In vain our plans of happiness we raise,
Pain is our lot, and patience is our praise;
Wealth, lineage, honours, conquest, or a throne,
Are what the wise would fear to call their own.
Health is at best a vain precarious thing,
And fair-fac'd youth is ever on the wing;
†'Tis like the stream, beside whose wat'ry bed
Some blooming plant exalts his flow'ry head,
Nurs'd by the wave the spreading branches rise,
Shade all the ground and flourish to the skies;
The waves the while beneath in secret flow,
And undermine the hollow bank below;
Wide and more wide the waters urge their way,
Bare all the roots and on their fibres prey.
Too late the plant bewails his foolish pride,
And sinks, untimely, in the whelming tide.
But why repine, does life deserve my sigh?
Few will lament my loss whene'er I die.

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* Here he quits Tibullus; the ten following verses have but a remote reference to Mr. Pope's letter.—*Mason.*

† "Youth, at the very best, is but the betrayer of human life in a gentler and smoother manner than age; 'tis like the stream that nourishes a plant upon a bank, and causes it to flourish and blossom to the sight, but at the same time is undermining it at the root in secret."—*Pope's Works, vol. 7, page 254, first edition, Warburton.*—Mr. West, by prolonging his paraphrase of this simile, gives it additional beauty from that very circumstance, but he ought to have introduced it by Mr. Pope's own thought, "Youth is a betrayer;" his couplet preceding the simile conveys too general a reflection.—*Mason.*

* For those the wretches I despise or hate,
I neither envy nor regard their fate.
For me, whene'er all conquering Death shall spread
His wings around my unrepining head,
† I care not; tho' this face be seen no more,
The world will pass as cheerful as before;
Bright as before the day-star will appear,
The fields as verdant, and the skies as clear;
Nor storms nor comets will my doom declare,
Nor signs on earth, nor portents in the air;
Unknown and silent will depart my breath,
Nor Nature e'er take notice of my death.
Yet some there are (ere spent my vital days)
Within whose breasts my tomb I wish to raise.
Lov'd in my life, lamented in my end,
Their praise would crown me as their precepts mend:
To them may these fond lines my name endear,
Not from the Poet but the Friend sincere.

Christ Church, July 4, 1737.

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* "I am not at all uneasy at the thought that many men, whom I never had any esteem for, are likely to enjoy this world after me."—*Vide ibid.*—*Mason.*

† "The morning after my exit the sun will rise as bright as ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green;" so far Mr. West copies his original, but instead of the following part of the sentence, "People will laugh as heartily and marry as fast as they used to do," he inserts a more solemn idea,

Nor storms nor comets, &c.

justly perceiving that the elegiac turn of his epistle would not admit so ludicrous a thought, as was in its place in Mr. Pope's familiar letter; so that we see, young as he was, he had obtained the art of judiciously selecting, one of the first provinces of good taste.—*Mason.*

VIII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

TER a month's expectation of you, and a fort-
ht's despair, at Cambridge, I am come to town,
l to better hopes of seeing you. If what you
t me last be the product of your melancholy,
at may I not expect from your more cheerful
ırs? For by this time the ill health that you
nplain of is (I hope) quite departed; though,
were self-interested, I ought to wish for the
ıtinuance of any thing that could be the occa-
ı of so much pleasure to me.* Low spirits are
true and faithful companions; they get up
h me, go to bed with me, make journeys and
urns as I do; nay, and pay visits, and will
ın affect to be jocose, and force a feeble laugh
h me; but most commonly we sit alone toge-
ır, and are the prettiest insipid company in the
rld.* However, when you come, I believe they
ıst undergo the fate of all humble companions,
d be discarded. Would I could turn them to
same use that you have done, and make an
ollo of them. If they could write such verses
th me, not hartshorn, nor spirit of amber, nor
that furnishes the closet of an apothecary's

* Grief fills the room up of my absent child;
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
Puts on his pretty looks, &c.—*Rogers.*

widow, should persuade me to part with them: But, while I write to you, I hear the bad news of Lady Walpole's death on Saturday night last. Forgive me if the thought of what my poor Horace must feel on that account, obliges me to have done in reminding you that I am yours, &c.

London, Aug. 22, 1737.

IX. MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

I WAS hindered in my last, and so could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The description of a road, which your coach wheels have so often honoured, it would be needless to give you; suffice it that I arrived safe* at my Uncle's, who is a great hunter in imagination; his dogs take up every chair in the house, so I am forced to stand at this present writing; and though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues still to regale his ears and nose with their comfortable noise and stink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I should ride, and reading when I should hunt. My comfort amidst all this is, that I have at the distance of half a mile, through a green lane, a forest (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at least as good as so, for I spy no human thing

* At Burnham, in Buckinghamshire.

ı it but myself. It is a little chaos of moun-
ains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that
o not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the
eclivities quite so amazing as Dover cliff; but
ust such hills as people who love their necks as
ell as I do may venture to climb, and craggs
hat give the eye as much pleasure as if they
ere more dangerous: Both vale and hill are
overed with most venerable beeches, and other
ery reverend vegetables, that, like most other
ncient people, are always dreaming out their old
tories to the winds,

> And as they bow their hoary tops relate,
> In murm'ring sounds, the dark decrees of fate;
> While visions, as poetic eyes avow,
> Cling to each leaf, and swarm on every bough.

ıt the foot of one of these squats ME I,* (il
enseroso) and there grow to the trunk for a whole
ıorning. The timorous hare and sportive squirrel
ambol around me like Adam in Paradise, before
ıe had an Eve; but I think he did not use to
ead Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this situa-
ion I often converse with my Horace, aloud too,
hat is talk to you, but I do not remember that I

* The same ludicrous expression is met with in Foote's
lay of the Knights, p. 27, from the mouth of Sir Penurious
rifle,—"And what does *me I*, but take a trip to a
offee-house in St. Martin's-lane," &c.—See also Don
uixote by Smollett, vol. iv. p. 30, and Cibber's Lady's
take, vol. ii. act 1, p. 209.—*Ed.*

ever heard you answer me. I beg pardon for taking all the conversation to myself, but it is entirely your own fault. We have old Mr. Southern at a Gentleman's house a little way off, who often comes to see us; he is now seventy-seven years old,* and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable as an old man can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him, and think of Isabella and Oroonoko. I shall be in Town in about three weeks. Adieu.

September, 1737.

X. MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE. †

I SYMPATHIZE with you in the sufferings which you foresee are coming upon you. We are both at present, I imagine, in no very agreeable situation; for my part I am under the misfortune of having nothing to do, but it is a misfortune which, thank my stars, I can pretty well bear. You are

* He lived nine years longer, and died at the great age of eighty-six. Mr. Gray always thought highly of his pathetic powers, at the same time that he blamed his ill taste for mixing them so injudiciously with farce, in order to produce that monstrous species of composition called Tragi-comedy.—*Mason.*

† At this time with his father at Houghton. Mr. Gray writes from the same place he did before, from his Uncle's house in Buckinghamshire.—*Mason.*

in a confusion of wine, and roaring, and hunting, and tobacco, and, heaven be praised, you too can pretty well bear it; while our evils are no more I believe we shall not much repine. I imagine, however, you will rather choose to converse with the living dead, that adorn the walls of your apartments, than with the dead living that deck the middles of them; and prefer a picture of still life to the realities of a noisy one, and as I guess, will imitate what you prefer, and for an hour or two at noon will stick yourself up as formal as if you had been fixed in your frame for these hundred years, with a pink or rose in one hand, and a great seal ring on the other. Your name, I assure you, has been propagated in these countries by a convert of yours, one * *, he has brought over his whole family to you; they were before pretty good Whigs, but now they are absolute Walpolians. We have hardly any body in the parish but knows exactly the dimensions of the hall and saloon at Houghton, and begin to believe that the † lanthorn is not so great a consumer of the fat of the land as disaffected persons have said: For your reputation, we keep to ourselves your not hunting nor

† A lanthorn for eighteen candles, of copper-gilt, hung in the hall at Houghton. It became a favourite object of Tory satire at the time; see the Craftsman. This lanthorn was afterwards sold to the Earl of Chesterfield. See Walpole's Works, vol. ii. p. 263; and Letters to H. Maun, vol. ii. p. 368.—*Ed.*

drinking hogan, either of which here would be sufficient to lay your honour in the dust. To-morrow se'nnight I hope to be in Town, and not long after at Cambridge. I am, &c.

Burnham, Sept. 1737.

XI. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

RECEIVING no answer to my last letter, which I writ above a month ago, I must own I am a little uneasy. The slight shadow of you which I had in Town, has only served to endear you to me the more. The moments I past with you made a strong impression upon me. I singled you out for a friend and I would have you know me to be yours, if you deem me worthy.—Alas, Gray, you cannot imagine how miserably my time passes away. My health and nerves, and spirits are, thank my stars, the very worst, I think in Oxford. Four-and-twenty hours of pure unalloyed health together, are as unknown to me as the 400,000 characters in the Chinese vocabulary. One of my complaints has of late been so over-civil as to visit me regularly once a month—jam certus conviva. This is a painful nervous head-ach, which, perhaps you have some times heard me speak of before. Give me leave to say, I find no physic comparable to your letters If, as it is said in Ecclesiasticus, "Friendship b

the physic of the mind," prescribe to me, dear Gray, as often and as much as you think proper, I shall be a most obedient patient.

Non ego
Fidis irascar medicis, offendar amicis.

I venture here to write you down a Greek epigram *, which I lately turned into Latin, and hope you will excuse it.

Perspicui puerum ludentem in margine rivi
Immersit vitreæ limpidus error aquæ:
At gelido ut mater moribundum e flumine traxit
Credula, & amplexu funus inane fovet;
Paulatim puer in dilecto pectore, somno
Languidus, æternúm lumina composuit.

Adieu! I am going to my tutor's lectures on one Puffendorff, † a very jurisprudent author as you shall read on a summer's day. Believe me yours, &c.

Christ Church, Dec. 2, 1738.

* Of Posidippus. *Vide Anthologia, H. Stephan. p. 220.* Mr. Gray in his MS. notes to this edition of the Anthologia (of which I shall give an account in a subsequent section) inserts this translation, and adds "Descriptio pulcherrima & quæ tenuem illum græcorum spiritum mirificè sapit;" and in conclusion, "Posidippus inter principes Anthologiæ poetas emicat, Ptolemæi Philadelphi seculo vixit."—*Mason.*

† Professor D. Stewart, in his first Dissertation prefixed to the Supplement to the Encyclop. Britannica, (p. 135) has quoted this passage in the name of *Gray*, and not of *West.—Ed.*

XII. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

LITERAS mi Favonî! * abs te demum, nudiustertiùs credo, accepi planè mellitas, nisi fortè quà de ægritudine quâdam tuâ dictum: atque hoc sane mihi habitum est non paulò acerbiùs, quod te capitis morbo implicitum esse intellexi; oh morbum mihi quam odiosum! qui de industria id agit, ut ego in singulos menses, dii boni, quantis jocunditatibus orbarer! quàm ex animo mihi dolendum est, quod

Medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid.

Salutem mehercule, nolo, tam, parvipendas, atq; amicis tam improbè consulas: quanquam tute fortassis—æstuas angusto limite mundi, viamq; (ut dicitur) affectas Olympo, nos tamen non esse tam sublimes, utpote qui hisce in sordibus & fæce diutius paululum versari volumus, reminiscendum est: illæ tuæ Musæ, si te ament modo, derelinqui paulisper non nimis ægrè patientur: indulge, amabo te, plusquam soles, corporis exercitationibus: magis te campus habeat, aprico magis te dedas otio, ut ne id ingenium quod tam cultum curas, diligenter nimis

* Mr. Gray, in all his latin compositions addressed to this gentleman, calls him Favonius, in allusion to the name of West.—*Mason.*

dum foves, officiosarum matrum ritu, interimas. Vide quæso, quam ἰατριχῶς tecum agimus,

ἠδ' ἐπιθήσω
Φάρμαχ' ἃ κεν πάνσησι μελαινάων ὀδυνάων.*

si de his pharmacis non satis liquet; sunt festivitates meræ, sunt facetiæ & risus; quos ego equidem si adhibere nequeo, tamen ad præcipiendum (ut medicorum fere mos est) certè satis sim; id, quod poeticè sub finem epistolæ lusisti, mihi gratissimum quidem accidit; admodum latinè coctum & conditum tetrasticon, græcam tamen illam ἀφελείαν mirificè sapit: tu quod restat, vide, sodes, hujusce hominis ignorantiam; cum, unde hoc tibi sit depromptum, (ut fatear) prorsus nescio: sane ego equidem nihil in capsis reperio quo tibi minimæ partis solutio fiat. Vale, & me ut soles, ama.

A. D. 11, Kalend. Februar.

XIII.† MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

I OUGHT to answer you in Latin, but I feel I dare not enter the lists with you—cupidum, pater optime,

* Hom. Il. Δ. v. 191.

† This was written in French, but as I doubted whether it would stand the test of polite criticism so well as the preceding would of learned, I chose to translate so much of it as I thought necessary in order to preserve the chain of correspondence.—*Mason.*

vires deficiunt. Seriously, you write in that language with a grace and an Augustan urbanity that amazes me: Your Greek too is perfect in its kind. And here let me wonder that a man, longè græcorum doctissimus, should be at a loss for the verse and chapter whence my epigram is taken. I am sorry I have not my Aldus with me that I might satisfy your curiosity; but he with all my other literary folks are left at Oxford, and therefore you must still rest in suspence. I thank you again and again for your medical prescription. I know very well that those "risus, festivitates & facetiæ" would contribute greatly to my cure, but then you must be my apothecary as well as physician, and make up the dose as well as direct it; send me, therefore, an electuary of these drugs, made up secundùm artem, "et eris mihi magnus Apollo," in both his capacities as a god of poets and god of physicians. Wish me joy of leaving my college, and leave yours as fast as you can. I shall be settled at the temple very soon.

Dartmouth-street, Feb. 21, 1737-8.

XIV. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

[This Letter began with the Sapphic Ode to Mr. West, and ended with the Alcaic fragment.]

* * * *

OHE! amicule noster, et unde, sodes tu μυσοπάτακτος adeò repente evasisti? jam rogitaturum credo. Nescio hercle, sic planè habet. Quicquid enim nugarum 'επὶ σχολῇς inter ambulandum in palimpsesto scriptitavi, hisce te maxumè impertiri visum est, quippe quem probare, quod meum est, aut certè ignoscere solitum probè novi: bonâ tuâ veniâ sit si fortè videar in fine subtristior; nam risui jamdudum salutem dixi; etiam paulò mœstitiæ studiosiorem factum scias, promptumque, Καινοῖς παλαιὰ δακρύοις τένειν κακά.

* * * *

Sed de me satis. Cura ut valeas.

Jun. 1738.

XV. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

I RETURN you a thousand thanks for your elegant ode, and wish you every joy you wish yourself in it. But, take my word for it, you will never spend so agreeable a day here as you describe; alas! the

sun with us only rises to shew us the way to Westminster Hall. Nor must I forget thanking you for your little Alcaic fragment. The optic Naiads are infinitely obliged to you.

I was last week at Richmond Lodge, with Mr. Walpole, for two days, and dined with * Cardinal Fleury; as far as my short sight can go, the character of his great art and penetration is very just, he is indeed

Nulli penetrabilis astro.

I go to-morrow to Epsom, where I shall be for about a month. Excuse me, I am in haste †, but believe me always, &c.

August 29, 1738.

XVI. MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

My dear Sir, I should say‡ Mr. Inspector General of the Exports and Imports; but that appel-

* Sir Robert Walpole.

† Mr. West seems to have been, indeed, in haste when he writ this letter; else, surely, his fine taste would have led him to have been more profuse in his praise of the Alcaic fragment. He might (I think) have said, without paying too extravagant a compliment to Mr. Gray's genius, that no poet of the Augustan age ever produced four more perfect lines, or what would sooner impose upon the best critic, as being a genuine ancient composition.—*Mason.*

‡ Mr. Walpole was just named to that post, which he exchanged soon after for that of Usher of the Exchequer.—*Mason.*

lation would make but an odd figure in conjunction with the three familiar monosyllables above written, for

> Non benè conveniunt nec in unâ sede morantur
> Majestas & amor.*

Which is, being interpreted, Love does not live at the Custom-house; however, by what style, title, or denomination soever you choose to be dignified or distinguished hereafter, these three words will stick by you like a burr, and you can no more get quit of these and your christian name than St. Anthony could of his pig. My motions at present (which you are pleased to ask after) are much like those of a pendulum or (†Dr. Longically speaking) oscillatory. I swing from Chapel or Hall home, and from home to Chapel or Hall. All the strange incidents that happen in my journeys and returns I shall be sure to acquaint you with; the most wonderful is, that it now rains exceedingly, this has refreshed the ‡ prospect, as the way for the most part lies between green fields on either hand, terminated with buildings at some distance, castles, I presume, and of great antiquity. The roads are very good, being, as I suspect, the works of Julius Cæsar's army, for

* Ovidii Met. II. v. 6.

† Dr. Long, the Master of Pembroke Hall, at this time read lectures in experimental philosophy.—*Mason.*

‡ All that follows is a humorously-hyperbolic description of the quadrangle of Peter-House.—*Mason.*

they still preserve, in many places, the appearance of a pavement in pretty good repair, and, if they were not so near home, might perhaps be as much admired as the Via Appia; there are at present several rivulets to be crossed, and which serve to enliven the view all around. The country is exceeding fruitful in ravens and such black cattle; but, not to tire you with my travels, I abruptly conclude. Yours, &c.

August, 1738.

XVII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

I AM coming away all so fast, and leaving behind me without the least remorse, all the beauties of Sturbridge Fair. Its white bears may roar, its apes may wring their hands, and crocodiles cry their eyes out, all's one for that; I shall not once visit them, nor so much as take my leave. The university has published a severe edict against schismatical congregations, and created half a dozen new little procterlings to see its orders executed, being under mighty apprehensions lest * Henley and his gilt tub should come to the Fair and seduce their young ones; but their pains are to small purpose, for lo, after all, he is not coming.

* Orator Henley.

I am at this instant in the very agonies of leaving college, and would not wish the worst of my enemies a worse situation. If you knew the dust, the old boxes, the bedsteads, and tutors that are about my ears, you would look upon this letter as a great effort of my resolution and unconcernedness in the midst of evils. I fill up my paper with a loose sort of version of that scene in Pastor Fido that begins, Care selve beati.*

Sept. 1738.

* This Latin version is extremely elegiac, but as it is only a version I do not insert it. Mr. Gray did not begin to learn Italian till about a year and a half before he translated this scene; and I find amongst his papers an English translation of part of the 4th Canto of Tasso's Gerusalemma Liberata, done previously to this, which has great merit. In a letter to Mr. West, dated March, 1737, he says, "I learn Italian like any dragon, and in two months am got through the 16th Book of Tasso, whom I hold in great admiration; I want you to learn too, that I may know your opinion of him; nothing can be easier than that language to any one who knows Latin and French already, and there are few so copious and expressive." In the same letter he tells him, "that his College has set him a versifying on a public occasion, (viz. those verses which are called Tripos) on the theme of Luna est habitabilis." The poem is to be found in the Musæ Etonenses, (vol. ii. p. 107.) I would further observe, on this occasion, that though Mr. Gray had lately read and translated Statius, yet when he attempted composition, his judgment immediately directed him to the best model of versification; accordingly his hexameters are, as far as modern ones can be, after the manner of Virgil: They move in the succession of his pauses, and close with his elisions.—*Mason.*

XVIII. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

I THANK you again and again for your two l
most agreeable letters. They could not have co
more à-propos: I was without any books to div
me, and they supplied the want of every thing;
made them my classics in the Country, they w
my Horace and Tibullus—Non ita loquor asse
tandi causâ ut probè nosti si me noris, verum q
sic mea est sententia. I am but just come to Tow
and, to shew you my esteem of your favours
venture to send you by the penny post, to yc
Father's, what you will find on the next page;
hope it will reach you soon after your arrival, yc
boxes out of the waggon, yourself out of t
coach, and tutors out of your memory. Adi
we shall see one another, I hope, to-morrow.

ELEGIA.

Quod mihi tum gratæ misisti dona Camœnæ,
  Qualia Mænalius Pan Deus ipse velit,
Amplector te, Graie, & toto corde reposco,
  Oh desiderium jam nimis usque meum:
Et mihi rura placent, & me quoq; sæpe volentem
  Duxerunt Dryades per sua prata Deæ;
Sicubi lympha fugit liquido pede, sive virentem,
  Magna decus nemoris, quercus opacat humum:
Illuc mane novo vagor, illuc vespere sero,
  Et, noto ut jacui gramine, nota cano.

Nec nostræ ignorant divinam Amaryllida sylvæ:
Ah, si desit amor, nil mihi rura placent.
Ille jugis habitat Deus, ille in vallibus imis,
Regnat & in Cœlis, regnat & Oceano;
Ille gregem torosq; domat; sæviq; leonem
Seminis; ille feros, ultus Adonin, apros:
Quin & fervet amore nemus, ramoq; sub omni
Concentu tremulo plurima gaudet avis.
Duræ etiam in sylvis agitant connubia plantæ,
Dura etiam & fertur saxa animasse Venus.
Durior & saxis, & robore durior ille est,
Sincero siquis pectore amare vetat:
Non illi in manibus sanctum deponere pignus,
Non illi arcanum cor aperire velim;
Nescit amicitias, teneros qui nescit amores:
Ah! si nulla Venus, nil mihi rura placent.
Me licet a patriâ longè in tellure juberent
Externâ positum ducere fata dies;
Si vultus modo amatus adesset, non ego contra
Plorarem magnos voce querente Deos.
At dulci in gremio curarum oblivia ducens
Nil cuperem præter posse placere meæ;
Nec bona fortunæ aspiciens, neq; munera regum,
Illa intrà optarem brachia cara mori.

Sept. 17, 1738.

SECTION THE SECOND.

As I allot this Section entirely to that part of Mr. Gray's life which he spent in travelling through France and Italy, my province will be chiefly that of an Editor; and my only care to select, from a large collection of letters written to his parents and to his friend Mr. West, those parts which, I imagine, will be most likely either to inform or amuse the reader. The multiplicity of accounts, published, both before and after the time when these letters were written, of those very places which Mr. Gray describes, will necessarily take from them much of their novelty; yet the elegant ease of his epistolary style has a charm in it for all readers of true taste, that will make every apology of this sort needless. They will perceive, that as these letters were written without even the most distant view of publication, they are essentially different in their manner of description from any others that have either preceded or followed them; add to this, that they are interspersed occasionally with some exquisitely finished pieces of Latin poetry, which he composed on the spot for the entertainment of his friend. But not to anticipate any part of the reader's pleasure, I shall only further say, to forewarn him of a disappointment, that this correspondence is defective towards the end, and includes

no description either of Venice or its territory; the ast places which Mr. Gray visited. This defect was occasioned by an unfortunate disagreement between him and Mr. Walpole, arising from the lifference of their tempers. The former being, rom his earliest years, curious, pensive, and philo-ophical; the latter gay, lively, and, consequently, nconsiderate:* this therefore occasioned their eparation at Reggio. Mr. Gray went before him o Venice; and staying there only till he could find neans of returning to England, he made the best f his way home, repassing the Alps, and following lmost the same route through France by which he ad before gone to Italy.—*Mason.*

I. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Amiens, April 1, N. S. 1739.

As we made but a very short journey to-day, and ame to our inn early, I sit down to give you some

* In justice to the memory of so respectable a friend Mr. Valpole enjoins me to charge himself with the chief blame n their quarrel; confessing that more attention and com-laisance, more deference to a warm friendship, superior dgment, and prudence, might have prevented a rupture at gave much uneasiness to them both, and a lasting con-ern to the survivor; though in the year 1744 a reconciliation as effected between them, by a Lady who wished well to oth parties.—*Mason.*

account of our expedition. On the 29th (according to the style here) we left Dover at twelve at noon, and with a pretty brisk gale, which pleased every body mighty well, except myself, who was extremely sick the whole time; we reached Calais by five: The weather changed, and it began to snow hard the minute we got into the harbour, where we took the boat and soon landed. Calais is an exceeding old, but very pretty town, and we hardly saw any thing there that was not so new and so different from England, that it surprised us agreeably. We went the next morning to the great Church, and were at high Mass (it being Easter Monday). We saw also the Convents of the Capuchins, and the Nuns of St. Dominic; with these last we held much conversation, especially with an English Nun, a Mrs. Davis, of whose work I sent you by the return of the Pacquet, a letter-case to remember her by. In the afternoon we took a post-chaise (it still snowing very hard) for Boulogne, which was only eighteen miles further. This chaise is a strange sort of conveyance, of much greater use than beauty, resembling an ill-shaped chariot, only with the door opening before instead of the side; three horses draw it, one between the shafts, and the other two on each side, on one of which the postillion rides, and drives too:*

* This was before the introduction of post-chaises here, else it would not have appeared a circumstance worthy notice.—*Mason.*

This vehicle will, upon occasion, go fourscore miles a-day, but Mr. Walpole, being in no hurry, chooses to make easy journies of it, and they are easy ones indeed; for the motion is much like that of a sedan, we go about six miles an hour, and commonly change horses at the end of it: It is true they are no very graceful steeds, but they go well, and through roads which they say are bad for France, but to me they seem gravel walks and bowling-greens; in short it would be the finest travelling in the world, were it not for the inns, which are mostly terrible places indeed. But to describe our progress somewhat more regularly, we came into Boulogne when it was almost dark, and went out pretty early on Tuesday morning; so that all I can say about it is, that it is a large, old, fortified town, with more English in it than French. On Tuesday we were to go to Abbéville, seventeen leagues, or fifty-one short English miles; but by the way we dined at Montreuil, much to our hearts' content, on stinking mutton cutlets, addled eggs, and ditch water. Madame the hostess made her appearance in long lappets of bone lace and a sack of linsey-woolsey. We supped and lodged pretty well at Abbéville, and had time to see a little of it before we came out this morning. There are seventeen convents in it, out of which we saw the chapels of Minims and the Carmelite Nuns. We are now come further thirty miles to Amiens, the chief city of the province of Picardy. We have seen the ca-

thedral, which is just what that of Canterbury* must have been before the reformation. It is about the same size, a huge Gothic building, beset on the outside with thousands of small statues, and within adorned with beautiful painted windows, and a vast number of chapels dressed out in all their finery of altar-pieces, embroidery, gilding, and marble. Over the high altar are preserved, in a very large wrought shrine of massy gold, the relicks of St. Firmin, their patron saint. We went also to the chapels of the Jesuits and Ursuline Nuns, the latter of which is very richly adorned. To-morrow we shall lie at Clermont, and next day reach Paris. The country we have passed through hitherto has been flat, open, but agreeably diver-

* On this passage Mr. Whittington remarks, in his Essay on Gothic Architecture, 4to. p. 156—"It is extraordinary that Gray should have compared this church (Amiens) to Canterbury: no two structures of the same sort were ever more totally and in every respect different." To the truth of Mr. Whittington's statement I can bear witness: nor can I at all account for the comparison drawn by Gray; except by supposing that he concluded it to be accurate enough to furnish his *Mother* with an idea of what he had seen. In his Letter to West, when he mentions the church at Amiens, he does *not* compare it to Canterbury. And in a Letter to his Mother of a subsequent date, he describes the cathedral at *Rheims* in almost the same words which he used in his former Letter from *Amiens*, although they differ materially. He attempted, I should suppose, only to give a very general resemblance of size and splendour. To a person acquainted with the character of architecture, that distinguishes the cathedral of Canterbury, I may be

sified with villages, fields well-cultivated, and little rivers. On every hillock is a windmill, a crucifix, or a Virgin Mary dressed in flowers, and a sarcenet robe; one sees not many people or carriages on the road; now and then indeed you meet a strolling friar, a countryman with his great muff, or a woman riding astride on a little ass, with short petticoats, and a great head-dress of blue wool. * *

allowed to mention, that the church at Amiens is remarkable for its very rich, and highly ornamented façade, for its beautiful and lofty nave, its marigold windows, its aisles with side chapels on each side of the choir, the aisles to the transepts, and the circular colonnade at the eastern end. Moreover, like all the ecclesiastical structures which I have seen in the Provinces of Normandy and Picardy, it wants that commanding feature which is the glory of our English churches, the tower at the transept, a beautiful specimen of which exists at Canterbury. The absence of this, together with the enormous height of the nave, (of necessity supported by large buttresses,) renders the external appearance of this cathedral, at a little distance, heavy and unpleasing. Nor indeed is the simplicity of the interior architecture, in my opinion, at all suitable to the gorgeous and splendid accumulation of sculpture, which spreads, like a rich veil of stone-work, over the western front.—*Ed.*

II. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Paris, April 12, 1739.

ENFIN donc me voici à Paris. Mr. Walpole is gone out to supper at Lord Conway's, and here I remain alone, though invited too. Do not think I make a merit of writing to you preferably to a good supper; for these three days we have been here, have actually given me an aversion to eating in general. If hunger be the best sauce to meat, the French are certainly the worst cooks in the world; for what tables we have seen have been so delicately served, and so profusely, that, after rising from one of them, one imagines it impossible ever to eat again. And now, if I tell you all I have in my head, you will believe me mad, mais n'importe, courage, allons! for if I wait till my head grow clear and settle a little, you may stay long enough for a letter. Six days have we been coming hither, which other people do in two; they have not been disagreeable ones; through a fine, open country, admirable roads, and in an easy conveyance; the inns not absolutely intolerable, and images quite unusual presenting themselves on all hands. At Amiens we saw the fine cathedral, and eat paté de perdrix; passed through the park of Chantilly by the Duke of Bourbon's palace, which we only

beheld as we passed; broke down at Lusarche; stopt at St. Denis, saw all the beautiful monuments of the Kings of France, and the vast treasures of the abbey, rubies, and emeralds as big as small eggs, crucifixes, and vows, crowns and reliquaries, of inestimable value; but of all their curiosities the thing the most to our tastes, and which they indeed do the justice to esteem the glory of their collection, was a vase of an entire onyx, measuring at least five inches over, three deep, and of great thickness. It is at least two thousand years old, the beauty of the stone and sculpture upon it (representing the mysteries of Bacchus) beyond expression admirable; we have dreamed of it ever since. The jolly old Benedictine, that showed us the treasures, had in his youth been ten years a soldier; he laughed at all the relics, was very full of stories, and mighty obliging. On Saturday evening we got to Paris, and were driving through the streets a long while before we knew where we were. The minute we came, voilà Milors Holdernesse, Conway and his brother; all stayed supper, and till two o'clock in the morning, for here nobody ever sleeps; it is not the way: Next day go to dine at my Lord Holdernesse's, there was the Abbé Prevôt, author of the Cleveland, and several other pieces much esteemed: The rest were English. At night we went to the Pandore; a spectácle literally, for it is nothing but a beautiful piece of machinery of

three scenes. The first represents the chaos, and by degrees the separation of the elements. The second, the temple of Jupiter, the giving of the box to Pandora. The third, the opening of the box, and all the mischiefs that ensued. An absurd design, but executed in the highest perfection, and that in one of the finest theatres in the world; it is the grande sale des machines in the Palais des Tuileries. Next day dined at Lord Waldegrave's; then to the opera. Imagine to yourself for the drama four acts* entirely unconnected with each other, each founded on some little history, skilfully taken out of an ancient author, e. g. Ovid's Metamorphoses, &c. and with great address converted into a French piece of gallantry. For instance, that which I saw, called the Ballet de la Paix, had its first act built upon the story of Nireus. Homer having said he was the handsomest man of his time, the poet, imagining such a one could not want a mistress, has given him one. These two come in and sing sentiment in lamentable strains, neither air nor recitative; only, to one's great joy, they are every now and then interrupted by a dance, or (to one's great sorrow) by a chorus that borders the stage from one end to the other, and screams,

* The French opera has only three acts, but often a prologue on a different subject, which (as Mr. Walpole informs me, who saw it at the same time) was the case in this very representation.—*Mason.*

past all power of simile to represent. The second act was Baucis and Philemon. Baucis is a beautiful young shepherdess, and Philemon her swain. Jupiter falls in love with her, but nothing will prevail upon her; so it is all mighty well, and the chorus sing and dance the praises of Constancy. The two other acts were about Iphis and Ianthe, and the judgment of Paris. Imagine, I say, all this transacted by cracked voices, trilling divisions upon two notes and a half, accompanied by an orchestra of humstrums, and a whole house more attentive than if Farinelli sung, and you will almost have formed a just notion of the thing.* Our astonishment at their absurdity you can never conceive; we had enough to do to express it by screaming an hour louder than the whole dramatis personæ. We have also seen twice the Comédie Françoise; first, the Mahomet Second, a tragedy that has had a great run of late; and the thing itself does not want its beauties, but the actors are beyond measure delightful. Mademoiselle Gaussin (M. Voltaire's Zara) has with a charming (though little) person the most pathetic tone of

* Our author's sentiments here seem to correspond entirely with those which J. J. Rousseau afterwards published in his famous Lettre sur la Musique Françoise. In a French letter also, which Mr. Gray writ to his friend soon after this, he calls their music "des miaulemens & des heurlemens effroyables, melés avec un tintamarre du diable; voilà la musique Françoise en abregé."—*Mason.*

voice, the finest expression in her face, and most proper action imaginable. There is also a Dufrêne, who did the chief character, a handsome man and a prodigious fine actor. The second we saw was the Philosophe marié, and here they performed as well in comedy; there is a Mademoiselle Quinault, somewhat in Mrs. Clive's way, and a Monsieur Grandval, in the nature of Wilks, who is the genteelest thing in the world. There are several more would be much admired in England, and many (whom we have not seen) much celebrated here. Great part of our time is spent in seeing churches and palaces full of fine pictures, &c. the quarter of which is not yet exhausted. For my part, I could entertain myself this month merely with the common streets and the people in them. * * *

III. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Paris, May 22, 1739.

After the little particulars aforesaid I should have proceeded to a journal of our transactions for this week past, should have carried you post from hence to Versailles, hurried you through the gardens to Trianon, back again to Paris, so away to Chantilly. But the fatigue is perhaps more than you can bear, and moreover I think I have

reason to stomach your last piece of gravity. Supposing you were in your soberest mood, I am sorry you should think me capable of ever being so dissipé, so evaporé, as not to be in a condition of relishing any thing you could say to me. And now, if you have a mind to make your peace with me, arouse ye from your megrims and your melancholies, and (for exercise is good for you) throw away your night-cap, call for your jack-boots, and set out with me, last Saturday evening, for Versailles—and so at eight o'clock, passing through a road speckled with vines, and villas, and hares, and partridges, we arrive at the great avenue, flanked on either hand with a double row of trees about half a mile long, and with the palace itself to terminate the view; facing which, on each side of you is placed a semi-circle of very handsome buildings, which form the stables. These we will not enter into, because you know we are no jockeys. Well! and is this the great front of Versailles? What a huge heap of littleness! it is composed, as it were, of three courts, all open to the eye at once, and gradually diminishing till you come to the royal apartments, which on this side present but half a dozen windows and a balcony. This last is all that can be called a front, for the rest is only great wings. The hue of all this mass is black, dirty red, and yellow; the first proceeding from stone changed by age; the second, from a mixture of brick; and the last,

from a profusion of tarnished gilding. You cannot see a more disagreeable tout-ensemble; and, to finish the matter, it is all stuck over in many places with small busts of a tawny hue between every two windows. We pass through this to go into the garden, and here the case is indeed altered; nothing can be vaster and more magnificent than the back front; before it a very spacious terrace spreads itself, adorned with two large basons; these are bordered and lined (as most of the others) with white marble, with handsome statues of bronze reclined on their edges. From hence you descend a huge flight of steps into a semicircle formed by woods, that are cut all around into niches, which are filled with beautiful copies of all the famous antique statues in white marble. Just in the midst is the bason of Latona; she and her children are standing on the top of a rock in the middle, on the sides of which are the peasants, some half, some totally changed into frogs, all which throw out water at her in great plenty. From this place runs on the great alley, which brings you into a complete round, where is the bason of Apollo, the biggest in the gardens. He is rising in his car out of the water, surrounded by nymphs and tritons, all in bronze, and finely executed, and these, as they play, raise a perfect storm about him; beyond this is the great canal, a prodigious long piece of water, that terminates the whole: All this you have at one coup d'œil

in entering the garden, which is truly great. I cannot say as much of the general taste of the place: every thing you behold savours too much of art; all is forced, all is constrained about you; statues and vases sowed every where without distinction; sugar loaves and minced pies of yew; scrawl work of box, and little squirting jets-d'eau, besides a great sameness in the walks, cannot help striking one at first sight, not to mention the silliest of labyrinths, and all Æsop's fables in water; since these were designed in usum Delphini only. Here then we walk by moonlight, and hear the ladies and the nightingales sing. Next morning, being Whitsunday, make ready to go to the Installation of nine Knights du Saint Esprit, Cambis is one:* high mass celebrated with music, great crowd, much incense, King, Queen, Dauphin, Mesdames, Cardinals, and Court: Knights arrayed by his Majesty; reverences before the altar, not bows, but curtsies; stiff hams: much tittering among the ladies; trumpets, kettle-drums and fifes. My dear West, I am vastly delighted with Trianon, all of us with Chantilly; if you would know why, you must have patience, for I can hold my pen no longer, except to tell you that I saw Britannicus last night; all the characters, particularly Agrippina

* The Comte de Cambis was lately returned from his embassy in England.—*Mason.*

and Nero, done to perfection; to-morrow Phædra and Hippolitus. We are making you a little bundle of petites pieces; there is nothing in them, but they are acting at present; there are too Crebillon's Letters, and Amusemens sur le langage des Bêtes, said to be of one Bougeant, a Jesuit; they are both esteemed, and lately come out. This day se'nnight we go to Rheims.

IV. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Rheims, June 21, N. S. 1739.

We have now been settled almost three weeks in this city, which is more considerable upon account of its size and antiquity, than from the number of its inhabitants, or any advantages of commerce. There is little in it worth a stranger's curiosity, besides the cathedral church, which is a vast Gothic building of a surprising beauty and lightness, all covered over with a profusion of little statues, and other ornaments. It is here the Kings of France are crowned by the Archbishop of Rheims, who is the first Peer, and the Primate of the kingdom: The holy vessel made use of on that occasion, which contains the oil, is kept in the church of St. Nicasius hard by, and is believed to have been brought by an angel from heaven at the coronation of Clovis, the first christian king. The streets in

general have but a melancholy aspect, the houses all old; the public walks run along the side of a great moat under the ramparts, where one hears a continual croaking of frogs; the country round about is one great plain covered with vines, which at this time of the year afford no very pleasing prospect, as being not above a foot high. What pleasures the place denies to the sight, it makes up to the palate; since you have nothing to drink but the best champaigne in the world, and all sort of provisions equally good. As to other pleasures, there is not that freedom of conversation among the people of fashion here, that one sees in other parts of France; for though they are not very numerous in this place, and consequently must live a good deal together, yet they never come to any great familiarity with one another. As my Lord Conway had spent a good part of his time among them, his brother, and we with him, were soon introduced into all their assemblies: As soon as you enter, the lady of the house presents each of you a card, and offers you a party at quadrille; you sit down, and play forty deals without intermission, excepting one quarter of an hour, when every body rises to eat of what they call the gouter, which supplies the place of our tea, and is a service of wine, fruits, cream, sweetmeats, crawfish and cheese. People take what they like, and sit down again to play; after that, they make little parties to go to the walks together, and then all the com-

pany retire to their separate habitations. Very seldom any suppers or dinners are given; and this is the manner they live among one another; not so much out of any aversion they have to pleasure, as out of a sort of formality they have contracted by not being much frequented by people who have lived at Paris. It is sure they do not hate gaity any more than the rest of their country-people, and can enter into diversions, that are once proposed, with a good grace enough: for instance, the other evening we happened to be got together in a company of eighteen people, men and women of the best fashion here, at a garden in the town to walk; when one of the ladies bethought herself of asking, Why should not we sup here? Immediately the cloth was laid by the side of a fountain under the trees, and a very elegant supper served up; after which another said, Come, let us sing; and directly began herself: From singing we insensibly fell to dancing, and singing in a round; when somebody mentioned the violins, and immediately a company of them was ordered: Minuets were begun in the open air, and then came country-dances, which held till four o'clock next morning; at which hour the gayest lady there proposed, that such as were weary should get into their coaches, and the rest of them should dance before them with the music in the van; and in this manner we paraded through all the principal streets of the city, and waked

every body in it. Mr. Walpole had a mind to make a custom of the thing, and would have given a ball in the same manner next week; but the women did not come into it; so I believe it will drop, and they will return to their dull cards, and usual formalities. We are not to stay above a month longer here, and shall then go to Dijon, the chief city of Burgundy, a very splendid and very gay town; at least such is the present design.

V. MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.

Dijon, Friday, Sept. 11, N. S. 1739.

We have made three short days journey of it from Rheims hither, where we arrived the night before last: The road we have passed through has been extremely agreeable: it runs through the most fertile part of Champaigne by the side of the river Marne, with a chain of hills on each hand at some distance, entirely covered with woods and vineyards, and every now and then the ruins of some old castle on their tops; we lay at St. Dizier the first night, and at Langres the second, and got hither the next evening time enough to have a full view of this city in entering it: It lies in a very extensive plain covered with vines and corn, and consequently is plentifully supplied with both. I need not tell you that it is the chief city of Burgundy, nor that it is of great antiquity; con-

sidering which one should imagine it ought to be larger than one finds it. However, what it wants in extent, is made up in beauty and cleanliness, and in rich convents and churches, most of which we have seen. The palace of the States is a magnificent new building, where the Duke of Bourbon is lodged when he comes every three years to hold that assembly, as governor of the Province. A quarter of a mile out of the town is a famous Abbey of Carthusians, which we are just returned from seeing. In their chapel are the tombs of the ancient Dukes of Burgundy, that were so powerful, till at the death of Charles the Bold, the last of them, this part of his dominions was united by Lewis XI. to the crown of France. To-morrow we are to pay a visit to the Abbot of the Cistercians, who lives a few leagues off, and who uses to receive all strangers with great civility; his Abbey is one of the richest in the kingdom; he keeps open house always, and lives with great magnificence. We have seen enough of this town already to make us regret the time we spent at Rheims; it is full of people of condition, who seem to form a much more agreeable society than we found in Champaigne; but as we shall stay here but two or three days longer, it is not worth while to be introduced into their houses. On Monday or Tuesday we are to set out for Lyons, which is two days journey distant, and from thence you shall hear again from me.

VI. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Lyons, Sept. 18, N. S. 1739.

SCAVEZ vous bien, mon cher ami, que je vous hais, que je vous deteste? voila des termes un peu forts; and that will save me, upon a just computation, a page of paper and six drops of ink; which, if I confined myself to reproaches of a more moderate nature, I should be obliged to employ in using you according to your deserts. What: to let any body reside three months at Rheims, and write but once to them! Please to consult Tully de Amicit. page 5, line 25, and you will find it said in express terms, "Ad amicum inter Remos relegatum mense uno quinquies scriptum esto;" nothing more plain or less liable to false interpretations. Now because, I suppose, it will give you pain to know we are in being, I take this opportunity to tell you that we are at the ancient and celebrated Lugdunum, a city situated upon the confluence of the Rhône* and Saône (Arar, I should say) two people, who though of tempers extremely unlike, think fit to join hands here, and make a little party to travel

* See Walpole's Memoirs, pp. 414—418. From Pitt's Speech, comparing Fox and the Duke of Newcastle to the Rhône and Saône.—*Ed.*

to the Mediterranean in company; the lady comes gliding along through the fruitful plains of Burgundy, incredibili lenitate, ita ut oculis in utram partem fluit judicari non possit; the gentleman runs all rough and roaring down from the mountains of Switzerland to meet her; and with all her soft airs she likes him never the worse; she goes through the middle of the city in state, and he passes incog. without the walls, but waits for her a little below. The houses here are so high, and the streets so narrow, as would be sufficient to render Lyons the dismallest place in the world, but the number of people, and the face of commerce diffused about it, are, at least, as sufficient to make it the liveliest: between these two sufficiencies, you will be in doubt what to think of it; so we shall leave the city, and proceed to its environs, which are beautiful beyond expression: it is surrounded with mountains, and those mountains all bedropped and bespeckled with houses, gardens, and plantations of the rich Bourgeois, who have from thence a prospect of the city in the vale below on one hand, on the other the rich plains of the Lyonnois, with the rivers winding among them, and the Alps, with the mountains of Dauphiné, to bound the view. All yesterday morning we were busied in climbing up Mount Fourviere, where the ancient city stood perched at such a height, that nothing but the hopes of gain could certainly ever persuade their neighbours to pay them a visit: Here

are the ruins of the Emperors' palaces, that resided here, that is to say, Augustus and Severus; they consist in nothing but great masses of old wall, that have only their quality to make them respected. In a vineyard of the Minims are remains of a theatre; the Fathers, whom they belong to, hold them in no esteem at all, and would have showed us their sacristy and chapel instead of them: The Ursuline Nuns have in their garden some Roman baths, but we having the misfortune to be men, and heretics, they did not think proper to admit us. Hard by are eight arches of a most magnificent aqueduct, said to be erected by Antony, when his legions were quartered here: There are many other parts of it dispersed up and down the country, for it brought the water from a river many leagues off in La Forez. Here are remains too of Agrippa's seven great roads which met at Lyons; in some places they lie twelve feet deep in the ground: In short, a thousand matters that you shall not know, till you give me a description of the Païs de Tombridge, and the effect its waters have upon you.

VII. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Temple, Sept. 28, 1739.

If wishes could turn to realities, I would fling down my law books, and sup with you to-night. But, alas, here am I doomed to fix, while you are fluttering from city to city, and enjoying all the pleasures which a gay climate can afford. It is out of the power of my heart to envy your good fortune, yet I cannot help indulging a few natural desires; as for example, to take a walk with you on the banks of the Rhône, and to be climbing up Mount Fourviere;

> Jam mens prætrepidans avet vagari:
> Jam læti studio pedes vigescunt.

However, so long as I am not deprived of your correspondence, so long shall I always find some pleasure in being at home. And, setting all vain curiosity aside, when the fit is over, and my reason begins to come to herself, I have several other powerful motives which might easily cure me of my restless inclinations: Amongst these, my mother's ill state of health is not the least; which was the reason of our going to Tunbridge, so that you cannot expect much description or amusement from thence. Nor indeed is there much room for either; for all diversions there

may be reduced to two articles, gaming and going to church. They were pleased to publish certain Tunbrigiana this season; but such ana! I believe there were never so many vile little verses put together before. So much for Tunbridge: London affords me as little to say. What! so huge a town as London! Yes, consider only how I live in that town. I never go into the gay world or high world, and consequently receive nothing from thence to brighten my imagination. The busy world I leave to the busy; and am resolved never to talk politics till I can act at the same time. To tell old stories, or prate of old books, seems a little musty; and toujours Chapon bouilli, won't do. However, for want of better fare, take another little mouthful of my poetry.

O meæ jucunda comes quietis!
Quæ ferè ægrotum solita es levare
Pectus, et sensim ah! nimis ingruentes
Fallere curas:
Quid canes? quanto Lyra dic furore
Gesties, quando hâc reducem sodalem
Glauciam* gaudere simul videbis
Meque sub umbrâ?

* He gives Mr. Gray the name of Glaucias frequently in his Latin verse, as Mr. Gray calls him Favonius.—*Mason.*

VIII. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Lyons, Oct. 13, N. S. 1739.

It is now almost five weeks since I left Dijon, one of the gayest and most agreeable little cities of France, for Lyons, its reverse in all these particulars. It is the second in the kingdom in bigness and rank, the streets excessively narrow and nasty; the houses immensely high and large; (that, for instance, where we are lodged, has twenty-five rooms on a floor, and that for five stories) it swarms with inhabitants like Paris itself, but chiefly a mercantile people, too much given up to commerce, to think of their own, much less of a stranger's diversions. We have no acquaintance in the town, but such English as happen to be passing through here, in their way to Italy and the south, which at present happen to be near thirty in number. It is a fortnight since we set out from hence upon a little excursion to Geneva. We took the longest road, which lies through Savoy, on purpose to see a famous monastery, called the grand Chartreuse, and had no reason to think our time lost. After having travelled seven days very slow (for we did not change horses, it being impossible for a chaise to go post in these roads) we arrived at a little village,

among the mountains of Savoy, called Echelles; from thence we proceeded on horses, who are used to the way, to the mountain of the Chartreuse: It is six miles to the top; the road runs winding up it, commonly not six feet broad; on one hand is the rock, with woods of pine*-trees hanging over head; on the other, a monstrous precipice, almost perpendicular, at the bottom of which rolls a torrent, that sometimes tumbling among the fragments of stone that have fallen from on high, and sometimes precipitating itself down vast descents with a noise like thunder, which is still made greater by the echo from the mountains on each side, concurs to form one of the most solemn, the most romantic, and the most astonishing scenes I ever beheld: Add to this the strange views made by the craggs and cliffs on the other hand; the cascades that in many places throw themselves from the very summit down into the vale, and the river below; and many other particulars impossible to describe; you will conclude we had no occasion to repent our pains. This place St. Bruno chose to retire to, and upon its very top founded the aforesaid convent, which is the superior of the whole order. When we came there, the two fathers, who are commissioned to entertain strangers, (for the rest must neither speak one to another, nor to any

* *Not pine trees*, but beech and firs.—*Ed.*

one else) received us very kindly; and set before us a repast of dried fish, eggs, butter and fruits, all excellent in their kind, and extremely neat. They pressed us to spend the night there, and to stay some days with them; but this we could not do, so they led us about their house, which is, you must think, like a little city; for there are 100 fathers, besides 300 servants, that make their clothes, grind their corn, press their wine, and do every thing among themselves: The whole is quite orderly and simple; nothing of finery, but the wonderful decency, and the strange situation, more than supply the place of it. In the evening we descended by the same way, passing through many clouds that were then forming themselves on the mountain's side. Next day we continued our journey by Chamberry, which, though the chief city of the duchy, and residence of the king of Sardinia, when he comes into this part of his dominions, makes but a very mean and insignificant appearance; we lay at Aix, once famous for its hot baths, and the next night at Annecy; the day after, by noon, we got to Geneva. I have not time to say any thing about it, nor of our solitary journey back again. * * *

IX. MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.

Lyons, Oct. 25, N. S. 1739.

In my last I gave you the particulars of our little journey to Geneva: I have only to add, that we stayed about a week, in order to see Mr. Conway settled there: I do not wonder so many English choose it for their residence; the city is very small, neat, prettily built, and extremely populous; the Rhône runs through the middle of it, and it is surrounded with new fortifications, that give it a military compact air; which, joined to the happy, lively countenances of the inhabitants, and an exact discipline always as strictly observed as in time of war, makes the little republic appear a match for a much greater power; though perhaps Geneva, and all that belongs to it, are not of equal extent with Windsor and its two parks. To one that has passed through Savoy, as we did, nothing can be more striking than the contrast, as soon as he approaches the town. Near the gates of Geneva runs the torrent Arve, which separates it from the King of Sardinia's dominions; on the other side of it lies a country naturally, indeed, fine and fertile; but you meet with nothing in it but meagre, ragged, bare-footed peasants, with their children, in extreme misery and nastiness; and even of these no great numbers; You

no sooner have crossed the stream I have mentioned, but poverty is no more; not a beggar, hardly a discontented face to be seen; numerous and well-dressed people swarming on the ramparts; drums beating, soldiers, well clothed and armed, exercising; and folks, with business in their looks, hurrying to and fro; all contribute to make any person, who is not blind, sensible what a difference there is between the two governments, that are the causes of one view and the other. The beautiful lake, at one end of which the town is situated; its extent; the several states that border upon it; and all its pleasures, are too well known for me to mention them. We sailed upon it as far as the dominions of Geneva extend, that is, about two leagues and a half on each side; and landed at several of the little houses of pleasure, that the inhabitants have built all about it, who received us with much politeness. The same night we eat part of a trout, taken in the lake, that weighed thirty-seven pounds; as great a monster as it appeared to us, it was esteemed there nothing extraordinary, and they assured us, it was not uncommon to catch them of fifty pounds; they are dressed here and sent post to Paris upon some great occasions; nay, even to Madrid, as we were told. The road we returned through was not the same we came by: We crossed the Rhône at Seyssel, and passed for three days among the mountains of Bugey, with-

out meeting with any thing new: At last we came out into the plains of La Bresse, and so to Lyons again. Sir Robert has written to Mr. Walpole, to desire he would go to Italy; which he has resolved to do; so that all the scheme of spending the winter in the south of France is laid aside, and we are to pass it in a much finer country. You may imagine I am not sorry to have this opportunity of seeing the place in the world that best deserves it: Besides as the Pope (who is eighty-eight, and has been lately at the point of death) cannot probably last a great while, perhaps we may have the fortune to be present at the election of a new one, when Rome will be in all its glory. Friday next we certainly begin our journey; in two days we shall come to the foot of the Alps, and six more we shall be in passing them. Even here the winter is begun; what then must it be among those vast snowy mountains where it is hardly ever summer? We are, however, as well armed as possible against the cold, with muffs, hoods, and masks of beaver, fur-boots, and bear skins. When we arrive at Turin, we shall rest after the fatigues of the journey. * * *

X. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Turin, Nov. 7, N. S. 1739.

I AM this night arrived here, and have just set down to rest me after eight days tiresome journey: For the three first we had the same road we before passed through to go to Geneva; the fourth we turned out of it, and for that day and the next travelled rather among than upon the Alps; the way commonly running through a deep valley by the side of the river Arc, which works itself a passage, with great difficulty and a mighty noise, among vast quantities of rocks, that have rolled down from the mountain tops. The winter was so far advanced, as in great measure to spoil the beauty of the prospect; however, there was still somewhat fine remaining amidst the savageness and horror of the place: The sixth we began to go up several of these mountains; and as we were passing one, met with an odd accident enough: Mr. Walpole had a little fat black spaniel,* that he was very fond of, which he sometimes used to set down, and let it run by the chaise side. We were at that time in a very rough road, not two

* "It was called "Tory," an odd name enough for a dog of his." MS. note by Bennet, Bishop of Cloyne.

ards broad at most; on one side was a great ood of pines, and on the other a vast precipice; was noon-day, and the sun shone bright, when ll of a sudden, from the wood-side, (which was s steep upwards, as the other part was down- ards) out rushed a great wolf, came close to the ead of the horses, seized the dog by the throat, nd rushed up the hill again with him in his outh. This was done in less than a quarter of minute; we all saw it, and yet the servants had ot time to draw their pistols, or do any thing save the dog.* If he had not been there, and ne creature had thought fit to lay hold of one of ne horses; chaise, and we, and all must inevit- bly have tumbled above fifty fathoms perpen- cular down the precipice. The seventh we came Lanebourg, the last town in Savoy; it lies at e foot of the famous mount Cenis, which is so uated as to allow no room for any way but over very top of it. Here the chaise was forced e pulled to pieces, and the baggage and that e carried by mules: We ourselves were wrap- up in our furs, and seated upon a sort of ed chair without legs, which is carried upon in the manner of a bier, and so begun to d by the help of eight men. It was six to the top, where a plain opens itself about

* his odd incident might have afforded Mr. Gray a for an ode, which would have been a good compa- that on the death of a favourite cat.—*Mason.*

as many more in breadth, covered perpetuall with very deep snow, and in the midst of that great lake of unfathomable depth, from whence river takes its rise, and tumbles over monstrou rocks quite down the other side of the mountai The descent is six miles more, but infinitely mo steep than the going up; and here the men pe fectly fly down with you, stepping from stone stone with incredible swiftness in places whe none but they could go three paces without fal ing. The immensity of the precipices, the roarin of the river and torrents that run into it, th huge craggs covered with ice and snow, and th clouds below you and about you, are objects it impossible to conceive without seeing them; an though we had heard many strange descriptio of the scene, none of them at all came up to i We were but five hours in performing the whol from which you may judge of the rapidity of th men's motion. We are now got into Piedmon and stopped a little while at La Ferriere, a sma village about three quarters of the way down, b still among the clouds, where we began to hear new language spoken round about us; at last w got quite down, went through the Pas de Suse, narrow road among the Alps, defended by tw fortresses, and lay at Bossolens: Next evenin through a fine avenue of nine miles in length, straight as a line, we arrived at this city, whic as you know, is the capital of the Principalit

and the residence of the King of Sardinia. * * * We shall stay here, I believe, a fortnight, and proceed for Genoa, which is three or four days journey to go post. I am, &c.

XI. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Turin, Nov. 16, N. S. 1739.

AFTER eight days journey through Greenland, we arrived at Turin. You approach it by a handsome avenue of nine miles long, and quite strait. The entrance is guarded by certain vigilant dragons, called Douâniers, who mumbled us for some time. The city is not large, as being a place of strength, and consequently confined within its fortifications; it has many beauties and some faults; among the first are streets all laid out by the line, regular uniform buildings, fine walks that surround the whole, and in general a good lively clean appearance: But the houses are of brick plastered, which is apt to want repairing; the windows of oiled paper, which is apt to be torn; and every thing very slight, which

* * * That part of the letter here omitted, contained only a description of the city; which, as Mr. Gray has given it to Mr. West in the following letter, and that in a more lively manner, I thought it unnecessary to insert: A liberty I have taken in other parts of this correspondence, in order to avoid repetitions.—*Mason.*

is apt to tumble down. There is an excellent Opera, but it is only in the Carnival: Balls every night, but only in the Carnival: Masquerades too, but only in the Carnival. This Carnival lasts only from Christmas to Lent; one half of the remaining part of the year is passed in remembering the last, the other in expecting the future Carnival. We cannot well subsist upon such slender diet, no more than upon an execrable Italian Comedy, and a Puppet-Show, called Rappresentazione d'un' anima dannata, which, I think, are all the present diversions of the place; except the Marquise de Cavaillac's Conversazione, where one goes to see people play at Ombre and Taroc, a game with 72 cards all painted with suns, and moons, and devils and monks. Mr. Walpole has been at court; the family are at present at a country palace, called La Venerie. The palace here in town is the very quintessence of gilding and looking-glass; inlaid floors, carved pannels, and painting, wherever they could stick a brush. I own I have not, as yet, any where met with those grand and simple works of Art, that are to amaze one, and whose sight one is to be the better for: But those of Nature have astonished me beyond expression. In our little journey up to the Grande Chartreuse, I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation, that there was no restraining: Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe

an atheist into belief, without the help of other argument. One need not have a very fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noon-day; You have Death perpetually before your eyes, only so far removed, as to compose the mind without frighting it. I am well persuaded St. Bruno was a man of no common genius, to choose such a situation for his retirement; and perhaps should have been a disciple of his, had I been born in his time. You may believe Abelard and Heloïse were not forgot upon this occasion: If I do not mistake, I saw you too every now and then at a distance along the trees; il me semble, que j'ai vu ce chien de visage là quelque part. You seemed to call to me from the other side of the precipice, but the noise of the river below was so great, that I really could not distinguish what you said; it seemed to have a cadence like verse. In your next you will be so good to let me know what it was. The week we have since passed among the Alps, has not equalled the single day upon that mountain, because the winter was rather too far advanced, and the weather a little foggy. However, it did not want its beauties; the savage rudeness of the view is inconceivable without seeing it: I reckoned in one day, thirteen cascades, the least of which was, I dare say, one hundred feet in height. I had Livy in the chaise with me, and beheld his "Nives cœlo propè immistæ, tecta informia imposita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida frigore,

homines intonsi & inculti, animalia inanimaque omnia rigentia gelu; omnia confragosa, præruptaque."* The creatures that inhabit them are, in all respects, below humanity; and most of them, especially women, have the tumidum guttur, which they call goscia. Mont Cenis, I confess, carries the permission† mountains have of being frightful rather too far; and its horrors were accompanied with too much danger to give one time to reflect upon their beauties. There is a family of the Alpine monsters I have mentioned, upon its very top, that in the middle of winter calmly lay in their stock of provisions and firing, and so are buried in their hut for a month or two under the snow. When we were down it, and got a little way into Piedmont, we began to find "Apricos quosdam colles, rivosque prope sylvas, & jam humano cultu digniora loca."‡ I read Silius Italicus too, for the first time; and wished for you according to custom. We set out for Genoa in two days time.

* See Livii Hist. lib. xxi. cap. xxxii. tom. iii. p. 421. ed. Drakenborch.

† A phrase borrowed from Madame De Sevigné, who quotes a *bon mot* on Pelisson, qu'il abusoit de la permission qu'ont les hommes, d'être laids.—*Mason.*

‡ See Livii Hist. lib. xxi. cap. xxxvii. p. 438.

XII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Genoa, Nov. 21, 1739.

Horridos tractus, Boreæq; linquens
Regna Taurini fera, molliorem
Advehor brumam, Genuæq; amantes
Litora soles.

At least if they do not, they have a very ill taste: for I never beheld any thing more amiable: Only figure to yourself a vast semicircular basin, full of fine blue sea, and vessels of all sorts and sizes, some sailing out, some coming in, and others at anchor; and all round it palaces, and churches peeping over one another's heads, gardens, and marble terraces full of orange and cypress trees, fountains, and trellis-works covered with vines, which altogether compose the grandest of theatres. This is the first coup d'œil, and is almost all I am yet able to give you an account of, for we arrived late last night. To-day was, luckily, a great festival, and in the morning we resorted to the church of the Madonna delle Vigne, to put up our little orisons; (I believe I forgot to tell you, that we have been some time converts to the holy Catholic church) we found our Lady richly dressed out, with a crown of diamonds on her own head, another upon the child's, and a constellation of wax lights burning before them:

Shortly after came the Doge, in his robes of crimson damask, and a cap of the same, followed by the Senate in black. Upon his approach began a fine concert of music, and among the rest two eunuchs' voices, that were a perfect feast to ears that had heard nothing but French operas for a year. We listened to this, and breathed nothing but incense for two hours. The Doge is a very tall, lean, stately, old figure, called Constantino Balbi; and the Senate seem to have been made upon the same model. They said their prayers, and heard an absurd white friar preach, with equal devotion. After this we went to the Annonciata, a church built by the family Lomellini, and belonging to it; which is, indeed, a most stately structure, the inside wholly marble of various kinds, except where gold and painting take its place. From hence to the Palazzo Doria. I should make you sick of marble, if I told you how it was lavished here upon the porticoes, the balustrades, and terraces, the lowest of which extends quite to the sea. The inside is by no means answerable to the outward magnificence; the furniture seems to be as old as the founder of the family.* There great embossed silver tables tell you, in bas-relief, his victories at sea; how he entertained the Emperor Charles, and how he refused the sovereignty of the Commonwealth when it was offered him; the rest is old-fashioned velvet chairs,

* The famous Andrea Doria.

and gothic tapestry. The rest of the day has been spent, much to our hearts' content, in cursing French music and architecture, and in singing the praises of Italy. We find this place so very fine, that we are in fear of finding nothing finer. We are fallen in love with the Mediterranean sea, and hold your lakes and your rivers in vast contempt. This is

"The happy country where huge lemons grow,"

as Waller says; and I am sorry to think of leaving it in a week for Parma, although it be

The happy country where huge cheeses grow.

XIII. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Bologna, Dec. 9, N. S. 1739.

OUR journey hither has taken up much less time than I expected. We left Genoa (a charming place, and one that deserved a longer stay) the week before last; crossed the mountains, and lay that night at Tortona, the next at St. Giovanni, and the morning after came to Piacenza. That city (though the capital of a Dutchy) made so frippery an appearance, that instead of spending some days there, as had been intended, we only dined, and went on to Parma; stayed there all the following day, which was passed in visiting the famous works of Correggio in the Dome, and other

churches. The fine gallery of pictures, that once belonged to the Dukes of Parma, is no more here; the King of Naples has carried it all thither, and the city had not merit enough to detain us any longer, so we proceeded through Reggio to Modena; this, though the residence of its Duke, is an ill built melancholy place, all of brick, as are most of the towns in this part of Lombardy: He himself lives in a private manner, with very little appearance of a court about him; he has one of the noblest collections of paintings in the world, which entertained us extremely well the rest of that day and a part of the next; and in the afternoon we came to Bologna. So now you may wish us joy of being in the dominions of his Holiness. This is a populous city, and of great extent: All the streets have porticoes on both sides, such as surround a part of Covent-Garden, a great relief in summer-time in such a climate; and from one of the principal gates to a church of the Virgin, [where is a wonder-working picture, at three miles distance] runs a corridore of the same sort, lately finished, and indeed a most extraordinary performance. The churches here are more remarkable for their paintings than architecture, being mostly old structures of brick; but the palaces are numerous, and fine enough to supply us with somewhat worth seeing from morning till night. The country of Lombardy, hitherto, is one of the most beautiful imaginable; the roads broad, and ex-

actly straight, and on either hand vast plantations of trees, chiefly mulberries and olives, and not a tree without a vine twining about it and spreading among its branches. This scene, indeed, which must be the most lovely in the world during the proper season, is at present all deformed by the winter, which here is rigorous enough for the time it lasts; but one still sees the skeleton of a charming place, and reaps the benefit of its product, for the fruits and provisions are admirable; in short, you find every thing that luxury can desire in perfection. We have now been here a week, and shall stay some little time longer. We are at the foot of the Appennine mountains; it will take up three days to cross them, and then we shall come to Florence, where we shall pass the Christmas. Till then we must remain in a state of ignorance as to what is doing in England, for our letters are to meet us there: If I do not find four or five from you alone, I shall wonder.

XIV. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Florence, Dec. 19, N. S. 1739.

We spent twelve days at Bologna, chiefly (as most travellers do) in seeing sights; for as we knew no mortal there, and as it is no easy matter to get admission into any Italian house, without

very particular recommendations, we could s
company but in public places; and there are
in that city but the churches. We saw, ther
churches, palaces, and pictures from morni
night; and the 15th of this month set ou
Florence, and began to cross the Appe
mountains; we travelled among and upon
all that day, and, as it was but indifferent we
were commonly in the middle of thick cloud
utterly deprived us of a sight of their bea
For this vast chain of hills has its beauties
all the valleys are cultivated; even the mou
themselves are many of them so within a lit
their very tops. They are not so horrid a
Alps, though pretty near as high; and the
road is admirably well kept, and paved throug
which is a length of fourscore miles, and
We left the pope's dominions, and lay that
in those of the Grand Duke at Fiorenzu
paltry little town, at the foot of Mount C
which is the highest of them all. Next mo
we went up it; the post-house is upon its
top, and usually involved in clouds, or half-l
in the snow. Indeed there was none of th
at the time we were there, but it was s
dismal habitation. The descent is most e
sively steep, and the turnings very short an
quent; however, we performed it without
danger, and in coming down could dimly dis
Florence, and the beautiful plain about it, th
the mists, but enough to convince us, it m

one of the noblest prospects upon earth in summer. That afternoon we got thither; and Mr. Mann,* the resident, had sent his servant to meet us at the gates, and conduct us to his house. He is the best and most obliging person in the world. The next night we were introduced at the Prince of Craon's† assembly (he has the chief power here in the Grand Duke's absence). The princess, and he, were extremely civil to the name of Walpole, so we were asked to stay supper, which is as much as to say, you may come and sup here whenever you please; for after the first invitation this is always understood. We have also been at the Countess Suarez's, a favourite of the late Duke, and one that gives the first movement to every thing gay that is going forward here. The news is every day expected from Vienna of the Great Duchess's delivery; if it be a boy, here will be all sorts of balls, masquerades, operas, and illuminations; if not, we must wait for the Carnival, when all those things come of course. In the mean time it is impossible to want entertainment; the famous gallery, alone, is an amusement for months; we commonly pass two or three hours every morning in it, and one has perfect leisure to consider all its beauties. You know it contains many hundred antique statues, such as

* Now Sir Horace Mann, and Envoy Extraordinary at the same court.—*Mason.*

† See Walpole's Letters to H. Mann, vol. ii. p. 283. l. cxcviii.—*Ed.*

the whole world cannot match, besides the vast collection of paintings, medals, and precious stones, such as no other prince was ever master of; in short, all that the rich and powerful house of Medicis has in so many years got together.* And besides this city abounds with so many palaces and churches, that you can hardly place yourself any where without having some fine one in view, or at least some statue or fountain, magnificently adorned; these undoubtedly are far more numerous than Genoa can pretend to; yet, in its general appearance, I cannot think that Florence equals it in beauty. Mr. Walpole is just come from being presented to the Electress Palatine Dowager; she is a sister of the late Great Duke's; a stately old lady, that never goes out but to church, and then she has guards, and eight horses to her coach. She received him with much ceremony, standing under a huge black canopy, and, after a few minutes talking, she assured him of her good will, and dismissed him: She never sees any body but thus in form; and so she passes her life,† poor woman! * * *

* He catalogued and made occasional short remarks on the pictures, &c. which he saw here, as well as at other places, many of which are in my possession, but it would have swelled this work too much if I had inserted them.—*Mason.*

† Persons of very high rank, and withal very good sense, will only feel the pathos of this exclamation.—*Mason.*

XV. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, Jan. 15, 1740.

I THINK I have not yet told you how we left that charming place Genoa: How we crossed a mountain of green marble, called Buchetto: How we came to Tortona, and waded through the mud to come to Castel St. Giovanni, and there eat mustard and sugar with a dish of crows' gizzards: Secondly, how we passed the famous plains; "Quâ Trebie, &c."* Nor, thirdly, how we passed through Piacenza, Parma, Modena, entered the territories of the Pope; stayed twelve days at Bologna; crossed the Appennines, and afterwards arrived at Florence. None of these things have I told you, nor do I intend to tell you, till you ask me some questions concerning them. No not even of Florence itself, except that it is as fine as possible, and has every thing in it that can bless the eyes. But, before I enter into particulars, you must make your peace both with me and the Venus de Medicis, who, let me tell you, is highly and justly offended at you for not inquiring, long before this, concerning her symmetry and proportions. * * *

* Here follow the verses beginning Qua Trebie glaucas, &c. &c.—*Ed.*

XVI. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

ELEGIA.*

Ergo desidiæ videor tibi crimine dignus;
Et meritò: victas do tibi sponte manus.
Arguor & veteres nimium contemnere Musas,
Irata et nobis est Medicæa Venus.
Mene igitur statuas & inania saxa vereri!
Stultule! marmoreâ quid mihi cum Venere?
Hìc veræ, hìc vivæ Veneres, & mille per urbem,
Quarum nulla queat non placuisse Jovi.
Cedite Romanæ formosæ et cedite Graiæ,
Sintque oblita Helenæ nomen et Hermionæ!
Et, quascunque refert ætas vetus, Heroinæ:
Unus honor nostris jam venit Angliasin.
Oh quales vultus, Oh quantum numen ocellis!
I nunc & Tuscas improbe confer opes.
Ne tamen hæc obtusa nimis præcordia credas,
Neu me adeo nullâ Pallade progenitum:
Testor Pieridumque umbras & flumina Pindi
Me quoque Calliopes semper amasse choros;
Et dudum Ausonias urbes, & visere Graias
Cura est, ingenio si licet ire meo:
Sive est Phidiacum marmor, seu Mentoris æra,
Seu paries Coo nobilis e calâmo;
Nec minus artificum magna argumenta recentûm
Romanique decus nominis & Veneti:
Quà Furor & Mavors & sævo in Marmore vultus,
Quaque et formoso mollior ære Venus.

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* The letter which accompanied this little Elegy is extant: probably it was only inclosed in one to Mr. \ pole.—*Mason.*

Quàque loquax spirat fucus, vivique labores,
  Et quicquid calamo dulciùs ausa manus:
Hìc nemora, & solâ mærens Melibœus in umbrâ,
  Lymphaque muscoso prosiliens lapide;
Illìc majus opus, faciesque in pariete major
  Exurgens, Divûm & numina Cœlicolûm;
O vos fælices, quibus hæc cognoscere fas est,
  Et totâ Italiâ, quà patet usque, frui!
Nulla dies vobis eat injucunda, nec usquam
  Norîtis quid sit tempora amara pati.

XVII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WHARTON.

Proposals for Printing by Subscription, in

THIS LARGE LETTER,

THE TRAVELS OF T. G. GENT.

WHICH WILL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING PARTICULARS.

CHAP. I.

THE Author arrives at Dover; his conversation with the Mayor of that Corporation. Sets out in the pacquet boat: grows very sick; the Author spews; a very minute account of all the circumstances thereof. His arrival at Calais; how the inhabitants of that country speak French, and are said to be all Papishes; the Author's reflections thereupon.

II.

How they feed him with soupe, and what soupe is. How he meets with a capucin, and what a

capucin is. How they shut him up in a post-chaise and send him to Paris; he goes wondering along during six days; and how there are trees and houses just as in England. Arrives at Paris without knowing it.

III.

Full account of the river Seine, and of the various animals and plants its borders produce. Description of the little creature called an Abbé, its parts, and their uses; with the reasons why they will not live in England, and the methods that have been used to propagate them there. A cut of the inside of a nunnery; its structure wonderfully adapted to the use of the animals that inhabit it; a short account of them, how they propagate without the help of a male: and how they eat up their own young ones, like cats and rabbits: supposed to have both sexes in themselves like a snail. Dissection of a Duchess, with copper-plates, very curious.

IV.

Goes to the opera: grand orchestra of hum-strums, bag-pipes, salt-boxes, tabors and pipes. Anatomy of a French ear, showing the formation of it to be entirely different from that of an English one; and that sounds have a directly contrary effect upon one and the other. Farinelli, at Paris, said to have a fine manner, but no voice.

ınd ballet, in which there is no seeing the dance petticoats. Old women with flowers and jewels ːk in the curls of their grey hair. Red-heeled es and roll-ups innumerable; hoops and pan- rs immeasurable, paint unspeakable. Tables, ɜrein is calculated, with the utmost exactness, several degrees of red, now in use, from the ng blushes of an Advocate's wife, to the flam- · crimson of a princess of the Blood; done by a ner in great vogue.

V.

The author takes unto him a taylour; his cha- ːter. How he covers him with silk and fringe, l widens his figure with buckram, a yard on ːh side. Waistcoat and breeches so strait, can neither breathe nor walk. How the bar- · curls him en bequille, and à la negligée, and ɜ a vast solitaire about his neck. How the lliner lengthens his ruffles to his fingers' ends, l sticks his two arms into a muff. How he ınot stir; and how they cut him in proportion his clothes.

VI.

He is carried to Versailles, despises it infinitely. dissertation upon taste. Goes to an Installa- n in the Chapel Royal; enter the King and ːy fiddlers solus: kettle-drums and trumpets; ɜens and dauphins; princesses and cardinals;

incense and the mass; old knights making curtsies; Holy Ghosts and fiery tongues.

VII.

Goes into the country to Rheims, in Champagne, stays there three months; what he did there (he must beg the reader's pardon but) he has really forgot.

VIII.

Proceeds to Lyons, vastness of that city. Can't see the streets for houses.* How rich it is, and how much it stinks. Poem upon the confluence of the Rhone and the Sâone, by a friend of the Author's; very pretty.

IX.

Makes a journey into Savoy, and in his way visits the Grand Chartreuse: he is set aside upon a mule's back, and begins to climb up the mountains: rocks and torrents beneath, pine trees and snows above: horrors and terrors on all sides. The Author dies of the fright.

* When one is misled by a proper name, the only use of which is to direct, one feels like the countryman, who complained—"That the houses hindered him from seeing Paris." The thing becomes an obstruction to itself. Walpole's Fugitive Pieces, Vol. I. p. 222.—From the Menagiana, Vol. I. p. 13. "Mons. le Duc de M. disoit, que les maisons de Paris etoient si hautes, qu'elles empechoient de voir la ville." See also. Bp. Hall's Satires, (Singer's ed.) p. 72.—*Ed.*

X.

He goes to Geneva. His mortal antipathy to a presbyterian, and the cure for it. Returns to Lyons; gets a surfeit with eating ortolans and lampreys; is advised to go into Italy for the benefit of the air.

XI.

Sets out the latter end of November to cross the Alps. He is devoured by a wolf: and how it is to be devoured by a wolf: the seventh day he comes to the foot of Mount Cenis. How he is wrap'd up in * bear-skins and beaver-skins; boots

* In a letter from Walpole to West, dated Turin, Nov. 11, 1737.—'So,' as the song says, 'we are in fair Italy!' I wonder we are, for on the highest precipice of Mount Cenis, the devil of Discord, in the similitude of sour wine, had got amongst our Alpine savages and set them a-fighting, with Gray and me in the chairs: they rushed him by me on a crag where there was scarce room for a cloven foot; the least slip had tumbled us into such a fog, and such an eternity, as we should never have found our way out of again. We were eight days in coming hither from Lyons, the four last in crossing the Alps. Such uncouth rocks and such uncomely inhabitants, my dear West, I hope I shall never see them again. At the foot of Mount Cenis we were obliged to quit our chaise, which was taken all to pieces and loaded on mules; and we were carried in low armchairs, on poles, swathed in beaver bonnets, beaver gloves, beaver stockings, muffs, and bear-skins. When we came to the top beheld the snows fallen; and such quantities, and conducted by such heavy clouds that hung glouting, that I thought we never could have waded through them,

on his legs; caps on his head: muffs on his hands, and taffety over his eyes. He is placed on a bier and is carried to heaven by the savages blind-fold. How he lights among a certain fat nation called Clouds: how they are always in a sweat, and never speak but they ——; how they flock about him, and think him very odd for not doing so too. He falls plump into Italy.

XII.

Arrives at Turin: goes to Genoa, and from thence to Placentia; crosses the river Tribia. The ghost of Hannibal appears to him, and what it and he say upon the occasion. Locked out of Parma on a cold winter's night; the Author, by an ingenious stratagem, gains admittance. Despises that city, and proceeds through Reggio to Modena. How the Duke and Duchess lie over their own stables, and go every night to a vile Italian comedy; despises them and it, and proceeds to Bologna.

XIII.

Enters into the dominions of the Pope o'Rome. Meets the devil, and what he says on the occasion.

The descent is two leagues, but steep, and rough as O—— father's face, over which, you know, the devil walked with hob-nails in his shoes.'—Walpole's Works, Vol. IV. p. 431.

The simile in the last sentence of this note, belongs to the "Marcellus of our tongue," as he has been somewhat singularly called by Dryden.—"I believe the devil travels over it in his sleep with hob-nails in his shoes." See Oldham's Character. Vol. II. p. 327.—*Ed.*

Very publick and scandalous doings between the vine and the elm trees, and how the olive trees are shocked thereupon. Author longs for Bologna sausages and hams, and how he grows as fat as an hog.

XIV.

Observations on antiquities. The Author proves that Bologna was the ancient Tarentum; that the battle of Salamis, contrary to the vulgar opinion, was fought by land, and that not far from Ravenna; that the Romans were a colony of the Jews; and that Eneas was the same with Ehud.

XV.

Arrival at Florence. Is of opinion that the Venus of Medicis is a modern performance, and that a very indifferent one, and much inferior to the K. Charles at Charing-cross. Account of the city and manners of the inhabitants. A learned Dissertation on the true situation of Gomorrah. . . .

And here will end the first part of these instructive and entertaining voyages. The Subscribers are to pay twenty guineas, nineteen down, and the remainder upon delivery of the book. N. B. A few are printed on the softest royal brown paper, for the use of the curious.

MY DEAR, DEAR WHARTON,*

(WHICH is a dear more than I give any body else. It is very odd to begin with a parenthesis, but) You may think me a beast not haveing sooner wrote to you, and to be sure a beast I am. Now, when one owns it, I don't see what you have left to say. I take this opportunity to inform you (an opportunity I have had every week this twelvemonth) that I am arrived safe at Calais, and am at present at— Florence, a city in Italy, in I don't know how many degrees of N. latitude. Under the line I am sure it is not, for I am at this instant expiring with cold. You must know, that not being certain what circumstances of my history would particularly suit your curiosity, and knowing that all I had to say to you would overflow the narrow limits of many a good quire of paper, I have taken this method of laying before you the contents, that you may pitch upon what you please, and give me your orders accordingly to expatiate thereupon: for I conclude you will write to me: won't you? oh! yes, when you know that in a week I set out

* Of Old-Park, near Durham. With this gentleman Mr. Gray contracted an acquaintance very early; and though they were not educated together at Eton, yet afterwards at Cambridge, when the Doctor was Fellow of Pembroke Hall, they became intimate friends, and continued so to the time of Mr. Gray's death.—*Mason.*

for Rome, and that the Pope is dead, and that I shall be (I should say, God willing; and if nothing extraordinary intervene; and if I am alive and well; and in all human probability) at the coronation of a new one. Now, as you have no other correspondent there, and as if you do not, I certainly shall not write again. (Observe my impudence.) I take it to be your interest to send me a vast letter, full of all sorts of news and politics, and such other ingredients, as to you shall seem convenient with all decent expedition, only do not be too severe upon the Pretender; and if you like my style, pray say so. This is à la Françoise; and if you think it a little too foolish, and impertinent, you shall be treated alla Toscana with a thousand Signoria Illustrissimas, in the mean time I have the honour to remain Your lofing frind tell deth,

T. GRAY.

Florence, March 12, N. S. 1740.

P. S. This is à l'Angloise. I don't know where you are; if at Cambridge pray let me know all, how, and about it: and if my old friends, Thomson or Clarke, fall in your way, say I am extremely theirs. But if you are in town, I entreat you to make my best compliments to Mrs. Wharton. Adieu. Yours, sincerely, a second time.

XVIII. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Florence, March 19, 1740.

The Pope* is at last dead, and we are to set out for Rome on Monday next. The conclave is still sitting there, and likely to continue so some time longer, as the two French Cardinals are but just arrived, and the German ones are still expected. It agrees mightily ill with those that remain inclosed: Ottoboni is already dead of an apoplexy; Altieri and several others are said to be dying, or very bad: Yet it is not expected to break up till after Easter. We shall be at Somma the first night, spend a day there, and in two more get to Rome. One begins to see in this country the first promises of an Italian spring, clear unclouded skies, and warm suns, such as are not often felt in England; yet, for your sake, I hope at present you have your proportion of them, and that all your frosts, and snows, and sharp breaths are, by this time, utterly vanished. I have nothing new or particular to inform you of: and, if you see things at home go on much in their old course, you must not imagine them more various abroad. The diversions of a Passionate Lent are composed of a sermon in the morning, full of hell and the devil; a dinner at

* Clement the Twelfth.

noon, full of fish and meagre diet; and in the evening, what is called a Conversazione, a sort of assembly at the principal people's houses, full of I cannot tell what: Besides this, there is twice a week a very grand concert. * * *

XIX. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Rome, April 2, N. S. 1740.

THIS is the third day since we came to Rome, but the first hour I have had to write to you in. The journey from Florence cost us four days, one of which was spent at Sienna, an agreeable, clean, old city, of no great magnificence or extent; but in a fine situation, and good air. What it has most considerable is its cathedral, a huge pile of marble, black and white laid alternately, and laboured with a gothic niceness and delicacy in the old-fashioned way. Within too are some paintings and sculpture of considerable hands. The sight of this, and some collections that were shewed us in private houses, were a sufficient employment for the little time we were to pass there: and the next morning we set forward on our journey through a country very oddly composed; for some miles you have a continual scene of little mountains cultivated from top to bottom with rows of olive-trees, or else elms, each of which has its vine twining about it, and mixing

with the branches; and corn sown between all the ranks. This diversified with numerous small houses and convents, makes the most agreeable prospect in the world: But, all of a sudden, it alters to black barren hills, as far as the eye can reach, that seem never to have been capable of culture, and are as ugly as useless. Such is the country for some time before one comes to Mount Radicofani, a terrible black hill, on the top of which we were to lodge that night. It is very high, and difficult of ascent; and at the foot of it we were much embarrassed by the fall of one of the poor horses that drew us. This accident obliged another chaise, which was coming down, to stop also; and out of it peeped a figure in a red cloak, with a handkerchief tied round its head, which, by its voice and mien, seemed a fat old woman: but upon its getting out, appeared to be Senesino, who was returning from Naples to Sienna, the place of his birth and residence. On the highest part of the mountain is an old fortress, and near it a house built by one of the Grand Dukes for a hunting-seat, but now converted into an inn; It is the shell of a large fabric, but such an inside, such chambers, and accommodations, that your cellar is a palace in comparison; and your cat sups and lies much better than we did; for, it being a saint's eve, there was nothing but eggs. We devoured our meagre fare; and, after stopping up the windows

with the quilts, were obliged to lie upon the straw beds in our clothes. Such are the conveniences in a road, that is, as it were, the great thoroughfare of all the world. Just on the other side of this mountain, at Ponte-Centino, one enters the patrimony of the church; a most delicious country, but thinly inhabited. That night brought us to Viterbo, a city of a more lively appearance than any we had lately met with; the houses have glass windows, which is not very usual here; and most of the streets are terminated by a handsome fountain. Here we had the pleasure of breaking our fast on the leg of an old hare and some broiled crows. Next morning, in descending Mount Viterbo, we first discovered (though at near thirty miles distance) the cupola of St. Peter's, and a little after began to enter on an old Roman pavement, with now and then a ruined tower, or a sepulchre on each hand. We now had a clear view of the city, though not to the best advantage, as coming along a plain quite upon a level with it; however it appeared very vast, and surrounded with magnificent villas and gardens. We soon after crossed the Tiber, a river that ancient Rome made more considerable than any merit of its own could have done: However, it is not contemptibly small, but a good handsome stream; very deep, yet somewhat of a muddy complexion. The first entrance of Rome is prodigiously striking. It is by a noble gate, designed by Michael Angelo,

and adorned with statues; this brings
a large square, in the midst of which
obelisk of granite, and in front you ha
view two churches of a handsome ar
and so much alike that they are called
with three streets, the middlemost of wh
of the longest in Rome. As high as m
tion was raised, I confess, the magni
this city infinitely surpasses it. You c
along a street but you have views of so
or church, or square, or fountain, the n
resque and noble one can imagine. W
yet set about considering its beauties, a
modern, with attention; but have alre
a slight transient view of some of the
markable. St. Peter's I saw the day
arrived, and was struck dumb with w
there saw the Cardinal d'Auvergne, o
French ones, who upon coming off hi
immediately repaired hither to offer up
at the high altar, and went directly int
clave; the doors of which we saw open
and all the other immured Cardinals ca
to receive him. Upon his entrance
closed again directly. It is supposed
not come to an agreement about a Pop
Easter, though the confinement is very
able. I have hardly philosophy enou
the infinity of fine things, that are her
the power of any body that has mone

gretting the want of it; but custom has the ›wer of making things easy to one. I have ›t yet seen his majesty of Great-Britain, &c. ıough I have the two boys in the gardens of the illa Borgese, where they go a-shooting almost ⁄ery day; it was at a distance, indeed, for we .d not choose to meet them, as you may imagine. his letter (like all those the English send or ›ceive) will pass through the hands of that ımily, before it comes to those it was intended ›r. They do it more honour than it deserves; nd all they will learn from thence will be, that I esire you to give my duty to my father, and ⁄herever else it is due, and that I am, &c.

XX. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Rome, April 15, 1740. Good-Friday.

'O-DAY I am just come from paying my adoration t St. Peter's to three extraordinary relics, which re exposed to public view only on these two days n the whole year, at which time all the confra-ernities in the city come in procession to see hem. It was something extremely novel to see hat vast church, and the most magnificent in the vorld, undoubtedly, illuminated (for it was night) ıy thousands of little crystal lamps, disposed in he figure of a huge cross at the high altar, and

seeming to hang alone in the air. All the light proceeded from this, and had the most singular effect imaginable as one entered the great door. Soon after came one after another, I believe, thirty processions, all dressed in linen frocks, and girt with a cord, their heads covered with a cowl all over, only two holes to see through left. Some of them were all black, others red, others white, others party-coloured; these were continually coming and going with their tapers and crucifixes before them; and to each company, as they arrived and knelt before the great altar, were shown from a balcony at a great height, the three wonders, which are, you must know, the head of the spear that wounded Christ; St. Veronica's handkerchief, with the miraculous impression of his face upon it; and a piece of the true cross, on the sight of which the people thump their breasts, and kiss the pavement with vast devotion. The tragical part of the ceremony is half a dozen wretched creatures, who with their faces covered but naked to the waist, are in a side chapel disciplining themselves with scourges full of iron prickles; but really in earnest, as our eyes can testify, which saw their backs and arms so that we should have taken it for a red satin doublet torn, and shewing the skin through, had we not been convinced of the contrary by the blood which was plentifully sprinkled about them. It is time I give you joy of Port-Bello, and many other things, which I hope are all true. * * * *

XXI. MR. WALPOLE TO MR. WEST.

Rome, April, 16, N. S. 1740.

I'LL tell you, West, because one is amongst new things, you think one can always write new things. When I first came abroad every thing struck me, and I wrote its history; but now I am grown so used to be surprised, that I don't perceive any flutter in myself when I meet with any novelties; curiosity and astonishment wear off, and the next thing is, to fancy that other people know as much of places as one's self; or, at least, one does not remember that they do not. It appears to me as odd to write to you of Saint Peter's, as it would do to write to you of Westminster Abbey. Besides, as one looks at Churches, &c. with a book of travels in one's hand, and sees every thing particularized there, it would appear transcribing to write upon the same subjects. I know you will hate me for this declaration; I remember how ill I used to take it when any body served me so that was travelling. Well, I will tell you something if you will love me: you have seen prints of the ruins of the temple of Minerva Medica; you shall only hear its situation, and then figure what a villa might be laid out there.

'Tis in the middle of a garden: at a little dis-

tance are two subterraneous grottos, which were the burial-places of the liberti of Augustus. There are all the niches and covers of the urns with the inscriptions remaining: and in one very considerable remains of an ancient stucco ceiling, with paintings in grotesque.

Some of the walks would terminate upon the Castellum Aquæ Martiæ, St. John Lateran, and St. Maria Maggiore, besides other churches: the walls of the garden would be two aqueducts, and the entrance through one of the old gates of Rome. This glorious spot is neglected, and only serves for a small vineyard and kitchen garden.

I am very glad that I see Rome while it yet exists; before a great number of years are elapsed, I question whether it will be worth seeing. Between the ignorance and poverty of the present Romans, every thing is neglected and falling to decay; the villas are entirely out of repair, and the palaces so ill kept, that half the pictures are spoiled by damp.

At the villa Ludovisi is a large oracular head of red marble, colossal, and with vast foramina for the eyes and mouth: the man that shewed the palace said it was *un ritratto della famiglia*. The Cardinal Corsini has so thoroughly pushed on the misery of Rome by impoverishing it, that there is no money but paper to be seen. He is reckoned to have amassed three millions of crowns. You may judge of the affluence the nobility live in, when I

assure you that what the chief princes allow for their own eating is a testoon a day (eighteen-pence); there are some extend their expense to five pauls, or half-a-crown. Cardinal Albani is called extravagant for laying out ten pauls for his dinner and supper. You may imagine they never have any entertainments: so far from it, they never have any company. The Princesses and Duchesses, particularly, lead the dismallest of lives. Being the posterity of Popes, though of worse families than the ancient nobility, they expect greater respect than my ladies the Countesses and Marquises will pay them; consequently they consort not, but mope in a vast palace with two miserable tapers, and two or three Monsignori, whom they are forced to court and humour, that they may not be entirely deserted. Sundays they do issue forth in a vast unwieldy coach to the Corso.

In short, child, after sun-set one passes one's time here very ill; and if I did not wish for you in the mornings, it would be no compliment to tell you that I do in the evening. Lord! how many English I could change for you, and yet buy you wondrous cheap! and then French and Germans I could fling into the bargain by dozens. Nations swarm here. You will have a great fat French Cardinal, garnished with thirty Abbès, roll into the area of St. Peter's, gape, turn short, and talk of the Chapel of Versailles. I heard one of them say t'other day, he had been at the *Capitale*.

One asked of course how he liked it—*Ah! il y a assez de belles choses.*

Tell Asheton I have received his letter; and will write next post; but I am in a violent hurry and have no more time; so Gray finishes this delicately.

Not so delicate; nor, indeed, would his conscience suffer him to write to you, till he received de vos nouvelles, if he had not the tail of another person's letter to use by way of evasion. I sha'n't describe, as being in the only place in the world that deserves it, which may seem an odd reason—but they say as how it's fulsome, and every body does it, (and, I suppose, every body says the same thing), else I should tell you a vast deal about the Coliseum, and the Conclave, and the Capitol, and these matters. A-propos du Colisée, if you don't know what it is, the Prince Borghese will be very capable of giving you some account of it, who told an Englishman that asked what it was built for,—"They say 'twas for Christians to fight tigers in."

We are just come from adoring a great piece of the true cross, St. Longinus's spear, and St. Veronica's handkerchief; all which have been this evening exposed to view in St. Peter's. In the same place, and on the same occasion, last night, Walpole saw a poor creature, naked to the waist,

discipline himself with a scourge filled with iron prickles, till he had made himself a raw doublet, that he took for red satin torn, and showing the skin through. I should tell you that he fainted away three times at the sight, and I twice and a half at the repetition of it. All this is performed by the light of a vast fiery cross, composed of hundreds of little crystal lamps, which appear through the great altar under the grand tribuna, as if hanging by itself in the air.

All the confraternities of the city resort thither in solemn procession, habited in linen frocks, girt with a cord, and their heads covered with a cowl all over, that has only two holes before to see through. Some of these are all black, others parti-coloured and white; and with these masqueraders that vast church is filled, who are seen thumping their breast, and kissing the pavement with extreme devotion. But methinks I am describing—'tis an ill habit, but this, like every thing else, will wear off. We have sent you our compliments by a friend of yours, and correspondent in a corner, who seems a very agreeable man; one Mr. Williams: I am sorry he staid so little a while in Rome. I forget Porto Bello all this while; pray let us know where it is, and whether you or Asheton had any hand in the taking of it. Duty to the Admiral.—Adieu! Ever yours,

T. GRAY.

XXII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Tivoli, May 20, 1740.

THIS day being in the palace of his Highness the Duke of Modena, he laid his most serene commands upon me to write to Mr. West, and said he thought it for his glory, that I should draw up an inventory of all his most serene possessions for the said West's perusal.—Imprimis, a house, being in circumference a quarter of a mile, two feet and an inch; the said house containing the following particulars, to wit, a great room. Item, another great room; item, a bigger room; item, another room; item, a vast room; item, a sixth of the same; a seventh ditto; an eighth as before; a ninth as abovesaid; a tenth (see No. 1.); item, ten more such, besides twenty besides, which, not to be too particular, we shall pass over. The said rooms contain nine chairs, two tables, five stools and a cricket. From whence we shall proceed to the garden, containing two millions of superfine laurel hedges, a clump of cypress trees, and half the river Teverone, that pisses into two thousand several chamberpots. Finis.—Dame Nature desired me to put in a list of her little goods and chattels, and, as they were small, to be very minute about them. She has built here three or four little mountains, and laid

them out in an irregular semi-circle; from certain others behind, at a greater distance, she has drawn a canal, into which she has put a little river of hers, called Anio; she has cut a huge cleft between the two innermost of her four hills, and there she has left it to its own disposal; which she has no sooner done, but, like a heedless chit, it tumbles headlong down a declivity fifty feet perpendicular, breaks itself all to shatters, and is converted into a shower of rain, where the sun forms many a bow, red, green, blue, and yellow. To get out of our metaphors without any further trouble, it is the most noble sight in the world. The weight of that quantity of waters, and the force they fall with, have worn the rocks they throw themselves among into a thousand irregular craggs, and to a vast depth. In this channel it goes boiling along with a mighty noise till it comes to another steep, where you see it a second time come roaring down (but first you must walk two miles farther) a greater height than before, but not with that quantity of waters; for by this time it has divided itself, being crossed and opposed by the rocks, into four several streams, each of which, in emulation of the great one, will tumble down too; and it does tumble down, but not from an equally elevated place; so that you have at one view all these cascades intermixed with groves of olive and little woods, the mountains rising behind them, and on the top of one (that which forms the extremity of one of the

half-circle's horns) is seated the town itself. At the very extremity of that extremity, on the brink of the precipice, stands the Sybils' temple, the remains of a little rotunda, surrounded with its portico, above half of whose beautiful Corinthian pillars are still standing and entire; all this on one hand. On the other, the open Campagna of Rome, here and there a little castle on a hillock, and the city itself on the very brink of the horizon, indistinctly seen (being 18 miles off) except the dome of St. Peter's; which, if you look out of your window, wherever you are, I suppose, you can see. I did not tell you that a little below the first fall, on the side of the rock, and hanging over that torrent, are little ruins which they shew you for Horace's house, a curious situation to observe the

> "Præceps Anio, & Tiburni lucus, & uda
> "Mobilibus pomaria rivis."

Mæcenas did not care for such a noise, it seems, and built him a house (which they also carry one to see) so situated that it sees nothing at all of the matter, and for any thing he knew there might be no such river in the world. Horace had another house on the other side of the Teverone, opposite to Mæcenas's; and they told us there was a bridge of communication, by which "andava il detto Signor per trastullarsi coll istesso Orazio." In coming hither we crossed the Aquæ Albulæ, a vile little brook that stinks like a fury, and they say it

has stunk so these thousand years. I forgot the Piscina of Quintilius Varus, where he used to keep certain little fishes. This is very entire, and there is a piece of the aqueduct that supplied it too; in the garden below is old Rome, built in little, just as it was, they say. There are seven temples in it, and no houses at all; They say there were none.

May 21.

We have had the pleasure of going twelve miles out of our way to Palestrina. It has rained all day as if heaven and us were coming together. See my honesty, I do not mention a syllable of the temple of Fortune, because I really did not see it; which, I think, is pretty well for an old traveller. So we returned along the Via Prænestina, saw the Lacus Gabinus and Regillus, where, you know, Castor and Pollux appeared upon a certain occasion. And many a good old tomb we left on each hand, and many an aqueduct,

Dumb are whose fountains, and their channels dry.

There are, indeed, two whole modern ones, works of Popes, that run about thirty miles a-piece in length; one of them conveys still the famous Aqua Virgo to Rome, and adds vast beauty to the prospect. So we came to Rome again, where waited for us a splendidissimo regalo of letters; in one of which came You, with your huge characters and wide

intervals, staring. I would have you to know, I expect you should take a handsome crow-quill when you write to me, and not leave room for a pin's point in four sides of a sheet of royal. Do you but find matter, I will find spectacles.

I have more time than I thought, and I will employ it in telling you about a ball that we were at the other evening. Figure to yourself a Roman villa; all its little apartments thrown open, and lighted up to the best advantage. At the upper end of the gallery, a fine concert, in which La Diamantina, a famous virtuosa, played on the violin divinely, and sung angelically; Giovannino and Pasqualini (great names in musical story) also performed miraculously. On each side were ranged all the secular grand monde of Rome, the Ambassadors, Princesses, and all that. Among the rest Il Serenissimo Pretendente (as the Mantova gazette calls him) displayed his rueful length of person, with his two young ones, and all his ministry around him. "Poi nacque un grazioso ballo," where the world danced, and I sat in a corner regaling myself with iced fruits, and other pleasant rinfrescatives.

XXIII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Rome, May, 1740.

I AM to-day just returned from Alba, a good deal fatigued; for you know the *Appian is somewhat tiresome.† We dined at Pompey's; he indeed was gone for a few days to his Tusculan, but, by the care of his Villicus, we made an admirable meal. We had the dugs of a pregnant sow, a peacock, a dish of thrushes, a noble scarus just fresh from the Tyrrhene, and some conchylia of the Lake with garum sauce: For my part I never eat better at Lucullus's table. We drank half-a-dozen cyathi a-piece of ancient Alban to Pholoë's health; and, after bathing, and playing an hour at ball, we mounted our essedum again, and proceeded up the mount to the temple. The priests there entertained us with an account of a wonderful shower of birds' eggs, that had fallen two days before, which had

* "Appia *longarum* teritur regina viarum."
Statii Silv. ii. 2. 12.—*Ed.*

† However whimsical this humour may appear to some readers, I chose to insert it, as it gives me an opportunity of remarking that Mr. Gray was extremely skilled in the customs of the ancient Romans; and has catalogued, in his common place book, their various eatables, wines, perfumes, clothes, medicines, &c. with great precision, referring under every article to passages in the Poets and Historians where their names are mentioned.—*Mason.*

no sooner touched the ground, but they were converted into gudgeons; as also that the night past, a dreadful voice had been heard out of the Adytum, which spoke Greek during a full half-hour, but no body understood it. But quitting my Romanities, to your great joy and mine, let me tell you in plain English, that we come from Albano. The present town lies within the inclosure of Pompey's Villa in ruins. The Appian way runs through it, by the side of which, a little farther, is a large old tomb, with five pyramids upon it, which the learned suppose to be the burying-place of the family, because they do not know whose it can be else. But the vulgar assure you it is the sepulchre of the Curiatii, and by that name (such is their power) it goes. One drives to Castel Gondolfo, a house of the Pope's, situated on the top of one of the Collinette, that forms a brim to the basin, commonly called the Alban lake. It is seven miles round; and directly opposite to you, on the other side, rises the Mons Albanus, much taller than the rest, along whose side are still discoverable (not to common eyes) certain little ruins of the old Alba longa. They had need be very little, as having been nothing but ruins ever since the days of Tullus Hostilius. On its top is a house of the Constable Colonna's, where stood the temple of Jupiter Latialis. At the foot of the hill Gondolfo, are the famous outlets of the lake, built with hewn stone, a mile and a half under ground. Livy, you know, amply informs us of the foolish occasion of

this expence, and gives me this opportunity of displaying all my erudition, that I may appear considerable in your eyes. This is the prospect from one window of the palace. From another you have the whole Campagna, the City, Antium, and the Tyrrhene sea (twelve miles distant) so distinguishable, that you may see the vessels sailing upon it. All this is charming. Mr. Walpole says, our memory sees more than our eyes in this country. Which is extremely true; since, for realities, Windsor, or Richmond Hill, is infinitely preferable to Albano or Frescati. I am now at home, and going to the window to tell you it is the most beautiful of Italian nights, which, in truth, are but just begun (so backward has the spring been here, and every where else, they say.) There is a moon! there are stars for you! Do not you hear the fountain? Do not you smell the orange flowers? That building yonder is the convent of S. Isidore; and that eminence, with the cypress trees and pines upon it, the top of M. Quirinal. This is all true, and yet my prospect is not two hundred yards in length. We send you some Roman inscriptions to entertain you. The first two are modern, transcribed from the Vatican library by Mr. Walpole.

Pontifices olim quem fundavere priores,
Præcipuâ Sixtus perficit arte tholum;*

* Sixtus V. built the dome of St. Peter's.—*Mason.* St. Peter's was begun by Nicholas V. in 1450; the Cupola was completed in 1590; in 1612-14, the Church and Vestibule were finished: in 1667 the Colonnade. Up to

Et Sixti tantum se gloria tollit in altum,
Quantum se Sixti nobile tollit opus:
Magnus honos magni fundamina ponere templi,
Sed finem cæptis ponere major honos.
Saxa agit Amphion, Thebana ut mœnia condat:
Sixtus & immensæ pondera molis agit.*
Saxa trahunt ambo longè diversa: sed arte
Hæc trahit Amphion; Sixtus & arte trahit.
At tantum exsuperat Dircæum Amphiona Sixtus,
Quantum hic exsuperat cætera saxa lapis.

Mine is ancient, and I think not less curious. It is exactly transcribed from a sepulchral marble at the villa Giustiniani. I put stops to it, when I understand it.

Dis Manibus
Claudiæ, Pistes
Primus Conjugi
Optumae, Sanctae,
Et Piae, Benemeritate.
Non æquos, Parcae, statuistis stamina vitæ.
Tam bene compositos potuistis sede tenere.
Amissa est conjux. cur ego & ipse moror?
Si · bella · esse · mî · iste · mea · vivere · debuit ·
Tristia contigerunt qui amissâ conjuge vivo.
Nil est tam miserum, quam totam perdere vitam.
Nec vita enasci dura peregistis crudelia pensa, sorores,
Ruptaque deficiunt in primo munere fusi.
O nimis injustæ ter denos dare munus in annos,
Deceptus · grautus · fatum · sic · pressit · egestas ·
Dum vitam tulero, Primus Pistes lugea conjugium.

1694 it is computed that forty-seven millions of Scudi, upwards of ten million and a half sterling, have been expended upon it.—*Ed.*

* He raised the obelisk in the great area.

XXIV. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Naples, June 17, 1740.

'UR journey hither was through the most beauti-
il part of the finest country in the world; and
very spot of it on some account or other, famous
ır these three thousand years past.* The season
as hitherto been just as warm as one would wish
; no unwholesome airs, or violent heats, yet
eard of: The people call it a backward year, and
re in pain about their corn, wine, and oil; but
'e, who are neither corn, wine, nor oil, find it
ery agreeable. Our road was through Velletri,
isterna, Terracina, Capua, and Aversa, and so to
Japles. The minute one leaves his Holiness's
ominions, the face of things begins to change
rom wide uncultivated plains to olive groves and
ell-tilled fields of corn, intermixed with ranks of

* Mr. Gray wrote a minute description of every thing
e saw in this tour from Rome to Naples; as also of the
nvirons of Rome, Florence, &c. But as these papers are
pparently only memorandums for his own use, I do not
ink it necessary to print them, although they abound with
any uncommon remarks, and pertinent classical quota-
ions. The reader will please to observe throughout this
ection, that it is not my intention to give Mr. Gray's
ravels, but only extracts from the Letters which he writ
uring his travels.—*Mason.*

elms, every one of which has its vine twining about it, and hanging in festoons between the rows from one tree to another. The great old fig-trees, the oranges in full bloom, and myrtles in every hedge, make one of the delightfullest scenes you can conceive; besides that, the roads are wide, well-kept, and full of passengers, a sight I have not beheld this long time. My wonder still increased upon entering the city, which I think for number of people, outdoes both Paris and London. The streets are one continued market, and thronged with populace so much that a coach can hardly pass. The common sort are a jolly lively kind of animals, more industrious than Italians usually are; they work till evening; then take their lute or guitar (for they all play) and walk about the city, or upon the sea-shore with it, to enjoy the fresco. One sees their little brown children jumping about stark-naked, and the bigger ones dancing with castanets, while others play on the cymbal to them. Your maps will show you the situation of Naples; it is on the most lovely bay in the world, and one of the calmest seas: It has many other beauties besides those of nature. We have spent two days in visiting the remarkable places in the country round it, such as the bay of Baiæ, and its remains of antiquity; the lake Avernus, and the Solfatara, Charon's grotto, &c. We have been in the Sybil's cave and many other strange holes under ground (I only name them because you may consult

Sandy's travels); but the strangest hole I ever was in, has been to-day at a place called Portici, where his Sicilian Majesty has a country-seat. About a year ago, as they were digging, they discovered some parts of ancient buildings above thirty feet deep in the ground: Curiosity led them on, and they have been digging ever since; the passage they have made, with all its turnings and windings, is now more than a mile long. As you walk you see parts of an amphitheatre, many houses adorned with marble columns, and incrusted with the same; the front of a temple, several arched vaults of rooms painted in fresco. Some pieces of painting have been taken out from hence finer than any thing of the kind before discovered, and with these the king has adorned his palace; also a number of statues, medals, and gems; and more are dug out every day. This is known to be a Roman town,* that in the emperor Titus's time was overwhelmed by a furious eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which is hard by. The wood and beams remain so perfect that you may see the grain! but burnt to a coal, and dropping into dust upon the least touch. We were to-day at the foot

* It should seem by the omission of its name, that it was not then discovered to be Herculaneum.—*Mason.* This was not the case, see a letter from Walpole to West on this subject, (Walpole's Works, vol. iv. p. 448,) dated Naples, June 14, 1740, where he calls the town by the name of Herculaneum.—*Ed.*

of that mountain, which at present smokes only a little, where we saw the materials that fed the stream of fire, which about four years since ran down its side. We have but a few days longer to stay here; too little in conscience for such a place. * * *

XXV. MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.

Florence, July 16, 1740.

At my return to this city, the day before yesterday, I had the pleasure of finding yours dated June the 9th. The period of our voyages, at least towards the South, is come as you wish. We have been at Naples, spent nine or ten days there, and returned to Rome, where finding no likelihood of a Pope yet these three months, and quite wearied with the formal assemblies and little society of that great city, Mr. Walpole determined to return hither to spend the summer, where he imagines he shall pass his time more agreeably than in the tedious expectation of what, when it happens, will only be a great show. For my own part, I give up the thoughts of all that with but little regret; but the city itself I do not part with so easily, which alone has amusements for whole years. However, I have passed through all that most people do, both ancient and modern; what that is you

may see better than I can tell you, in a thousand books. The Conclave we left in greater uncertainty than ever; the more than ordinary liberty they enjoy there, and the unusual coolness of the season, makes the confinement less disagreeable to them than common, and, consequently maintains them in their irresolution. There have been very high words, one or two (it is said) have come even to blows; two more are dead within this last month, Cenci and Portia; the latter died distracted: and we left another (Altieri) at the extremity: Yet nobody dreams of an election till the latter end of September. All this gives great scandal to all good catholics, and every body talks very freely on the subject. The Pretender (whom you desire an account of) I have had frequent opportunities of seeing at church, at the corso, and other places; but more particularly, and that for a whole night, at a great ball given by Count Patrizii to the Prince and Princess Craon,* (who were come to Rome at that time, that he might receive from the hands of the Emperor's minister there, the order of the golden fleece) at which he and his two sons were present. They are good fine boys, especially the younger, who has the more

* See them mentioned in Walpole's letters to H. Mann repeatedly; vide vol. ii. p. 201, l. clxxii. Madame de Mirepoix, the French Ambassadress in England, was their daughter, and Prince Beauvan, a marshall of France, their son. The Princess had been mistress of Leopold the Duke of Lorrain.—*Ed.*

spirit of the two, and both danced incessantly all night long. For him, he is a thin ill-made man, extremely tall and awkward, of a most unpromising countenance, a good deal resembling King James the Second, and has extremely the air and look of an idiot, particularly when he laughs or prays. The first he does not often, the latter continually. He lives private enough with his little court about him, consisting of Lord Dunbar, who manages every thing, and two or three of the Preston Scotch Lords, who would be very glad to make their peace at home.

We happened to be at Naples on Corpus Christi Day, the greatest feast in the year, so had an opportunity of seeing their Sicilian Majesties to advantage. The King walked in the grand procession, and the Queen (being big with child) sat in a balcony. He followed the Host to the church of St. Clara, where high mass was celebrated to a glorious concert of music. They are as ugly a little pair as one can see: she a pale girl, marked with the small-pox; and he a brown boy with a thin face, a huge nose, and as ungain as possible.

We are settled here with Mr. Mann in a charming apartment; the river Arno runs under our windows, which we can fish out of. The sky is so serene, and the air so temperate, that one continues in the open air all night long in a slight nightgown without any danger; and the marble bridge is the resort of every body, where they

hear music, eat iced fruits, and sup by moonlight; though as yet (the season being extremely backward every where) these amusements are not begun. You see we are now coming northward again, though in no great haste; the Venetian and Milanese territories, and either Germany or the South of France, (according to the turn the war may take) are all that remain for us, that we have not yet seen; as to Loretto, and that part of Italy, we have given over all thoughts of it.

XXVI. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Bond Street, June 5, 1740.

I LIVED at the Temple till I was sick of it: I have just left it, and find myself as much a lawyer as I was when I was in it. It is certain at least, I may study the law here as well as I could there. My being in chambers did not signify to me a pinch of snuff. They tell me my father was a lawyer, and, as you know, eminent in the profession; and such a circumstance must be of advantage to me. My uncle * too makes some figure in Westminster hall; and there's another advantage: Then my grandfather's name would get me many friends. Is it not strange that a young

* Sir Thomas Burnet.

fellow, that might enter the world with so many advantages, will not know his own interest? &c. &c.—What shall I say in answer to all this? For money, I neither doat upon it, nor despise it; it is a necessary stuff enough. For ambition, I do not want that neither; but it is not to sit upon a bench. In short, is it not a disagreeable thing to force one's inclination, especially when one's young? not to mention that one ought to have the strength of a Hercules to go through our common law; which, I am afraid, I have not. Well! but then say they, if one profession does not suit you, you may choose another more to your inclination. Now I protest I do not yet know my own inclination, and I believe, if that was to be my direction, I should never fix at all: There is no going by a weathercock.—I could say much more upon this subject; but there is no talking tête-à-tête cross the Alps. Oh the folly of young men, that never know their own interest! they never grow wise till they are ruined! and then no body pities them, nor helps them. Dear Gray! consider me in the condition of one that has lived these two years without any person that he can speak freely to. I know it is very seldom that people trouble themselves with the sentiments of those they converse with; so they can chat about trifles, they never care whether your heart aches or no. Are you one of these? I think not. But what right have I to

ask you this question? Have we known one another enough, that I should expect or demand sincerity from you? Yes, Gray, I hope we have; and I have not quite such a mean opinion of myself, as to think I do not deserve it. But, Signor, is it not time for me to ask something about your further intentions abroad? Where do you propose going next? an in Apuliam? nam illò si adveneris, tanquam Ulysses, cognosces tuorum neminem. Vale. So Cicero prophesies in the end of one of his letters*—and there I end. Yours, &c.

XXVII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, July 16, 1740.

You do yourself and me justice, in imagining that you merit, and that I am capable of sincerity. I

* This letter, written apparently in much agitation of mind, (which Mr. West endeavours to conceal by an unusual carelessness of manner) is chiefly inserted to introduce the answer to it; which appears to me to be replete with delicate feeling, manly sense, and epistolary ease. If the reader should think as highly of it as I do, let me remind him that the writer was not now quite four and twenty years old.—*Mason.*

In the Gent. Mag. for March 1783, (See Select. from G. Mag. vol. iii. p. 66.) is a letter from Mr. Williams, who had been Secretary to Chancellor West in Ireland, to West's mother, whom he afterwards married, showing

have not a thought, or even a weakness, I desire to conceal from you; and consequently on my side deserve to be treated with the same openness of heart. My vanity perhaps might make me more reserved towards you, if you were one of the heroic race, superior to all human failings; but as mutual wants are the ties of general society, so are mutual weaknesses of private friendships, supposing them mixt with some proportion of good qualities; for where one may not sometimes blame, one does not much care ever to praise. All this has the air of an introduction designed to soften a very harsh reproof that is to follow; but it is no such matter: I only meant to ask, Why did you change your lodging? Was the air bad, or the situation melancholy? If so, you are quite in the right. Only, is it not putting yourself a little out of the way of a people, with whom it seems necessary to keep up some sort of inter-

great solicitude about the prospects of young West, giving very sound advice with regard to his choice of a profession, attempting to overcome his dislike of the law, and from his own experience drawing a picture of the uncertainty, disappointment, and wretched dependence, that generally attend those bred to diplomatic pursuits. This was written the year preceding the Letter to Gray on the same subject. It appears from a Letter to Horace Walpole in June, 1741, that West thought of going into the army; as he applies to Walpole for his interest to procure a commission for him. See Walpole's Works, vol. iv. p. 461.—*Ed.* See Gutch's Collectanea Curiosa, vol. ii. p. 347. See also Gent's. Mag. Nov. 1789, p. 1029.

course and conversation, though but little for your pleasure or entertainment, (yet there are, I believe, such among them as might give you both) at least for your information in that study, which, when I left you, you thought of applying to? for that there is a certain study necessary to be followed, if we mean to be of any use in the world, I take for granted; disagreeable enough (as most necessities are) but, I am afraid, unavoidable. Into how many branches these studies are divided in England, every body knows; and between that which you and I had pitched upon and the other two, it was impossible to balance long. Examples shew one that it is not absolutely necessary to be a blockhead to succeed in this profession. The labour is long, and the elements dry and unentertaining; nor was ever any body (especially those that afterwards made a figure in it) amused or even not disgusted in the beginning; yet upon a further acquaintance, there is surely matter for curiosity and reflection. It is strange if, among all that huge mass of words, there be not somewhat intermixed for thought.* Laws have been the result of long deliberation, and that not of dull men, but the contrary; and have so close a connection with history, nay, with philosophy itself, that they must partake a little of

* See a Letter by Sir William Jones, in the Life of Sir Eardley Wilmot, p. 117, on this subject.—*Ed.*

what they are related to so nearly. Besides, tell me, have you ever made the attempt? Was not you frighted merely with the distant prospect? Had the Gothic character and bulkiness of those volumes (a tenth part of which perhaps it will be no further necessary to consult, than as one does a dictionary) no ill effect upon your eye? Are you sure, if Coke had been printed by Elzevir, and bound in twenty neat pocket volumes, instead of one folio, you should never have taken him for an hour, as you would a Tully, or drank your tea over him? I know how great an obstacle ill spirits are to resolution. Do you really think, if you rid ten miles every morning, in a week's time you should not entertain much stronger hopes of the Chancellorship, and think it a much more probable thing than you do at present? The advantages you mention are not nothing; our inclinations are more than we imagine in our own power; reason and resolution determine them, and support under many difficulties. To me there hardly appears to be any medium between a public life and a private one; he who prefers the first, must put himself in a way of being serviceable to the rest of mankind, if he has a mind to be of any consequence among them: Nay, he must not refuse being in a certain degree even dependent upon some men who are so already. If he has the good fortune to light on such as will make no ill use of his humility, there is no shame in this: If not, his ambition

ought to give place to a reasonable pride, and he should apply to the cultivation of his own mind those abilities which he has not been permitted to use for others' service. Such a private happiness (supposing a small competence of fortune) is almost always in every one's power, and the proper enjoyment of age, as the other is the employment of youth. You are yet young, have some advantages and opportunities, and an undoubted capacity, which you have never yet put to the trial. Set apart a few hours, see how the first year will agree with you, at the end of it you are still the master; if you change your mind, you will only have got the knowledge of a little somewhat that can do no hurt, or give you cause of repentance. If your inclination be not fixed upon any thing else, it is a symptom that you are not absolutely determined against this, and warns you not to mistake mere indolence for inability. I am sensible there is nothing stronger against what I would persuade you to, than my own practice; which may make you imagine I think not as I speak. Alas! it is not so; but I do not act what I think, and I had rather be the object of your pity, than you should be that of mine; and be assured, the advantage that I may receive from it, does not diminish my concern in hearing you want somebody to converse with freely, whose advice might be of more weight, and always at hand. We have some time since come to the

southern period of our voyages; we spent about nine days at Naples. It is the largest and most populous city, as its environs are the most deliciously fertile country, of all Italy. We sailed in the bay of Baiæ, sweated in the Solfatara, and died in the grotto del Cane, as all strangers do; saw the Corpus Christi procession, and the King and the Queen, and the city underground, (which is a wonder I reserve to tell you of another time) and so returned to Rome for another fortnight; left it (left Rome!) and came hither for the summer. You have seen* an Epistle to Mr. Ashton, that seems to me full of spirit and thought, and a good deal of poetic fire. I would know your opinion. Now I talk of verses, Mr. Walpole and I have frequently wondered you should never mention a certain imitation of Spenser, published last year by a †namesake of yours, with which we are all enraptured and enmarvailed.

* The reader will find this in Dodsley's Miscellany, and also amongst Mr. Walpole's Fugitive Pieces.—*Mason.*

† Gilbert West, Esq. This poem "On the Abuse of Travelling" is also in Dodsley's Miscellany.—*Mason.*

VIII. MR. WALPOLE AND MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, July 31, 1740, N. S.

AR WEST,

VE advised with the most notable antiqua- of this city, on the meaning of *Thur gut s;* I can get no satisfactory interpretation. y own opinion 'tis Welsh. I don't love ıg conjectures on a language in which I hitherto made little proficiency, but I will you with my explication. You know the s Aglaughlan, mother of Cadwalladhor, was ned for her conjugal virtues, and grief on the of her royal spouse. I conclude this medal truck in her regency, by her express order, memory of her Lord, and that the inscrip- *Thur gut Luetis*, means no more than her *Llewis*, or *Llewellin*.

return for your coins I send you two or three ferent kinds. The first is a money of one : kings of Naples; the device a horse; the , '*Equitas regni.*' This curious pun is on ı in the Great Duke's collection, and by chance I have met with a second. Another satirical medal struck on Lewis XIV.; 'tis b, covered with flower-de-luces, bursting, the

motto, *Se ipsissimo*. The last, and almost the only one I ever saw with a text well applied, is a German medal, with a rebellious town besieged and blocked up; the inscription, *This kind is not expelled but by fasting.*

Now I mention medals, have they yet struck the intended one on the taking Porto Bello? Admiral Vernon will shine in our medallic history. We have just received the news of the bombarding Carthagena, and the taking Chagre. We are in great expectation of some important victory obtained by the squadron under Sir John Norris: we are told the Duke is to be of the expedition; is it true? All the letters too talk of France's suddenly declaring war; I hope they will defer it for a season, or one shall be obliged to come through Germany. The Conclave still subsists, and the divisions still increase; it was very near separating last week, but by breaking into two Popes; they were on the dawn of a schism. Aldovrandi had thirty-three voices for three days, but could not procure the requisite two more; the Camerlingo having engaged his faction to sign a protestation against him, and each party were inclined to elect.

I don't know whether one should wish for a schism or not; it might probably rekindle the zeal for the church in the powers of Europe, which has been so far decaying. On Wednesday we expect a third she-meteor. Those learned lumi-

the ladies P—— and W—— are to be joined
e lady M—— W—— M——. You have
ɜen witness to the rhapsody of mystic non-
which these two fair ones debate incessantly,
onsequently cannot figure what must be the
of this triple alliance; we have some idea of
nly figure the coalition of prudery, debauch-
sentiment, history, Greek, Latin, French,
n, and metaphysics; all except the second
stood by halves, by quarters, or not at all.
hall have the journals of this notable academy.
ı, my dear West. Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

ɪGH far unworthy to enter into so learned and
cal a correspondence, I am employed pour
ɔuiller une page de sept pouces et demie en
ɜur, et cinq en largeur; and to inform you
we are at Florence, a city of Italy, and the
al of Tuscany; the latitude I cannot justly
but it is governed by a Prince called Great
e; an excellent place to employ all one's
al sensations in, but utterly contrary to one's
nal powers. I have struck a medal upon
ɜlf: the device is thus, O, and the motto
ilissimo, which I take in the most concise
ner to contain a full account of my person,
ɪments, occupations, and late glorious suc-

cesses. If you choose to be annihilated too, you cannot do better than undertake this journey. Here you shall get up at twelve o'clock, breakfast till three, dine till five, sleep till six, drink cooling liquors till eight, go to the bridge till ten, sup till two, and so sleep till twelve again.

> Labore fessi venimus ad larem nostrum
> Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto:
> Hoc est, quod unum est, pro laboribus tantis.
> O quid solutis est beatius curis?*

We shall never come home again; a universal war is just upon the point of breaking out; all out-lets will be shut up. I shall be secure in my nothingness, while you that will be so absurd as to exist, will envy me. You don't tell me what proficiency you make in the noble science of defence. Don't you start still at the sound of a gun? Have you learned to say Ha! ha! and is your neck clothed with thunder? Are your whiskers of a tolerable length? And have you got drunk yet with brandy and gunpowder? Adieu, noble Captain!

T. GRAY.

* See Catulli Carm. XXXI. v. 7. The order of the lines is somewhat transposed in the quotation in Gray's Letter.—*Ed.*

XXIX. MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Florence, Aug. 21, N. S. 1740.

r is some time since I have had the pleasure of
riting to you, having been upon a little excursion
ross the mountains to Bologna. We set out from
ence at sun-set, passed the Appennines by
ioon-light, travelling incessantly till we came to
ologna at four in the afternoon next day. There
'e spent a week agreeably enough, and returned
s we came. The day before yesterday arrived
ie news of a Pope; and I have the mortification
f being within four days journey of Rome, and
ot seeing his coronation, the heats being violent,
nd the infectious air now at its height. We had
n instance, the other day, that it is not only
ancy. Two country fellows, strong men, and
sed to the country about Rome, having occasion
) come from thence hither, and travelling on foot,
s common with them, one died suddenly on the
oad; the other got hither, but extremely weak,
nd in a manner stupid; he was carried to the
ospital, but died in two days. So, between fear
nd laziness, we remain here, and must be satisfied
ith the accounts other people give us of the
atter. The new Pope is called Benedict XIV.
eing created Cardinal by Benedict XIII. the last

Pope but one. His name is Lambertini, a noble Bolognese, and Archbishop of that city. When I was first there I remember to have seen him two or three times; he is a short, fat man, about sixty-five years of age, of a hearty, merry countenance, and likely to live some years. He bears a good character for generosity, affability, and other virtues; and, they say, wants neither knowledge nor capacity. The worst side of him is, that he has a nephew or two; besides a certain young favourite, called Melara, who is said to have had, for some time, the arbitrary disposal of his purse and family. He is reported to have made a little speech to the Cardinals in the Conclave, while they were undetermined about an election, as follows: "Most eminent Lords, here are three Bolognese of different characters, but all equally proper for the Popedom. If it be your pleasures to pitch upon a Saint, there is Cardinal Gotti; if upon a Politician, there is Aldrovandi; if upon a Booby, here am I." The Italian is much more expressive, and, indeed, not to be translated; wherefore, if you meet with any body that understands it, you may show them what he said in the language he spoke it. "Emin^{ssimi}. Sig^{ri}. Ci siamo tré, diversi al, ma tutti idonei al Papato. Si vi piace un Santo, c'è l'Gotti; se volete una testa scaltra, e Politica, c'è l'Aldrovandé; se un Coglione, ecco mi!" Cardinal Coscia is restored to his liberty, and, it is said, will be to all his benefices. Corsini (the last

Pope's nephew) as he has had no hand in this election, it is hoped, will be called to account for all his villanous practices. The Pretender, they say, has resigned all his pretensions to his eldest boy, and will accept of the Grand Chancellorship, which is thirty thousand crowns a-year; the pension he has at present is only twenty-thousand. I do not affirm the truth of this article; because, if he does, it is necessary he should take the ecclesiastical habit, and it will sound mighty odd to be called his Majesty the Chancellor.—— So ends my Gazette.

XXX. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, Sept. 25, N. S. 1740.

WHAT I send you now, as long as it is, is but a piece of a poem. It has the advantage of all fragments, to need neither introduction nor conclusion: Besides, if you do not like it, it is but imagining that which went before, and came after to be infinitely better. Look in Sandy's Travels for the history of Monte Barbaro, and Monte Nuovo.*

* * * * *

* To save the reader trouble, I here insert the passage referred to:—"West of Cicero's villa stands the eminent Gaurus, a stony and desolate mountain, in which there are

There was a certain little ode * set out from Rome in a letter of recommendation to you, but possibly fell into the enemies' hands, for I never heard of its arrival. It is a little impertinent to enquire after its welfare; but you, that are a father, will excuse a parent's foolish fondness. Last post I received a very diminutive letter: It made excuses for its unentertainingness, very little to the purpose; since it assured me, very strongly, of your esteem, which is to me the thing; all the rest appear but as the petits agrémens, the garnishing of the dish. P. Bougeant, in his langage des Bêtes, fancies that your birds, who continually repeat the same note, say only in plain

diverse obscure caverns, choked almost with earth, where many have consumed much fruitless industry in searching for treasure. The famous Lucrine Lake extended formerly from Avernus to the aforesaid Gaurus: But is now no other than a little sedgy plash, choked up by the horrible and astonishing eruption of the new mountain: whereof, as oft as I think, I am easy to credit whatsoever is wonderful. For who here knows not, or who elsewhere will believe, that a mountain should arise, (partly out of a lake and partly out of the sea) in one day and a night, unto such a height as to contend in altitude with the high mountains adjoining? In the year of our Lord 1538, on the 29th of September, when for certain days foregoing the country hereabout was so vexed with perpetual earthquakes, as no one house was left so entire as not to expect an immediate ruin; after that the sea had retired two hundred paces from the shore, (leaving abundance of fish, and springs of fresh water rising in the bottom) this mountain visibly ascended

* The Alcaic Ode.

terms, "Je vous aime, ma chère; ma chère, je vous aime;" and that those of greater genius indeed, with various trills, run divisions upon the subject; but that the *fond*, from whence it all proceeds, is "toujours je vous aime." Now you may, as you find yourself dull or in humour, either take me for a chaffinch or nightingale; sing your plain song, or show your skill in music, but in the bottom let there be, toujours de l'Amitié.

As to what you call my serious letter; be assured, that your future state is to me entirely indifferent. Do not be angry, but hear me; I mean with respect to myself. For whether you be at the top of Fame, or entirely unknown to mankind; at the Council-table, or at Dick's coffee-house;

about the second hour of the night, with an hideous roaring, horribly vomiting stones and such store of cinders as overwhelmed all the building thereabout, and the salubrious baths of Tripergula, for so many ages celebrated; consumed the vines to ashes, killing birds and beasts: the fearful inhabitants of Puzzol flying through the dark with their wives and children; naked, defiled, crying out, and detesting their calamities. Manifold mischiefs have they suffered by the barbarous, yet none like this which Nature inflicted.——This new mountain, when newly raised, had a number of issues; at some of them smoking and sometimes flaming; at others disgorging rivulets of hot waters; keeping within a terrible rumbling; and many miserably perished that ventured to descend into the hollowness above. But that hollow on the top is at present an orchard, and the mountain throughout is bereft of its terrors."—*Sandy's Travels, book 4, page 275, 277, and 278.*—*Mason.*

sick and simple, or well and wise; whatever alteration mere accident works in you, (supposing it utterly impossible for it to make any change in your sincerity and honesty, since these are conditions sine quâ non) I do not see any likelihood of my not being yours ever.

XXXI. MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.

Florence, Oct. 9, 1740.

THE beginning of next spring is the time determined for our return at furthest; possibly it may be before that time. How the interim will be employed, or what route we shall take is not so certain. If we remain friends with France, upon leaving this country we shall cross over to Venice, and so return through the cities north of the Po to Genoa; from thence take a felucca to Marseilles, and come back through Paris. If the contrary fall out, which seems not unlikely, we must take the Milanese, and those parts of Italy, in our way to Venice; from thence pass through the Tirol into Germany, and come home by the Low-Countries. As for Florence, it has been gayer than ordinary for this last month, being one round of balls and entertainments, occasioned by the arrival of a great Milanese

Lady; for the only thing the Italians shine in, is their reception of strangers. At such times every thing is magnificence: The more remarkable, as in their ordinary course of life they are parsimonious, even to a degree of nastiness. I saw in one of the vastest palaces in Rome (that of Prince Pamfilio) the apartment which he himself inhabited, a bed that most servants in England would disdain to lie in, and furniture much like that of a soph at Cambridge, for convenience and neatness. This man is worth £30,000 sterling a year. As for eating, there are not two Cardinals in Rome that allow more than six paoli, which is three shillings a day, for the expence of their table: and you may imagine they are still less extravagant here than there. But when they receive a visit from any friend, their houses and persons are set out to the greatest advantage, and appear in all their splendour; it is, indeed, from a motive of vanity, and with the hopes of having it repaid them with interest, whenever they have occasion to return the visit. I call visits going from one city of Italy to another; for it is not so among acquaintance of the same place on common occasions. The new Pope has retrenched the charges of his own table to a sequin (ten shillings) a meal. The applause which all he says and does meets with, is enough to encourage him really to deserve fame. They say he is an able and honest man; he is reckoned

a wit too. The other day, when the Senator of Rome came to wait upon him, at the first compliments he made him, the Pope pulled off his cap: His Master of the Ceremonies, who stood by his side, touched him softly, as to warn him that such a condescension was too great in him, and out of all manner of rule: Upon which he turned to him and said, "Oh! I cry you mercy, good Master, it is true, I am but a Novice of a Pope; I have not yet so much as learned ill manners."

* * *

XXXII. MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.

Florence,* Jan. 12, 1741.

We still continue constant at Florence, at present one of the dullest cities in Italy. Though it is the middle of the Carnival there are no public diversions; nor is masquerading permitted as yet. The Emperor's obsequies are to be celebrated publicly the 16th of this month; and after that, it is imagined every thing will go on in its usual course. In the mean time, to employ the minds

* Between the date of this and the foregoing letter, the reader will perceive an interval of full three months: as Mr. Gray saw no new places during this period, his letters were chiefly of news and common occurrences, and are therefore omitted.—*Mason.*

of the populace, the Government has thought fit to bring into the city in a solemn manner, and at a great expence, a famous statue of the Virgin called the Madonna dell'Impruneta, from the place of her residence, which is upon a mountain seven miles off. It never has been practised but at times of public calamity; and was done at present to avert the ill effects of a late great inundation, which it was feared might cause some epidemical distemper. It was introduced a fortnight ago in procession, attended by the Council of Regency, the Senate, the Nobility, and all the Religious Orders, on foot and bare-headed, and so carried to the great church, where it was frequented by an infinite concourse of people from all the country round. Among the rest I paid my devotions almost every day, and saw numbers of people possessed with the devil who were brought to be exorcised. It was indeed in the evening, and the church-doors were always shut before the ceremonies were finished, so that I could not be eye-witness of the event; but that they were all cured is certain, for one never heard any more of them the next morning. I am to-night just returned from seeing our Lady make her exit with the same solemnities she entered. The show had a finer effect than before; for it was dark; and every body (even those of the mob that could afford it) bore a white wax flambeau. I believe there were at least five thousand of them, and the

march was near three hours in passing before the window. The subject of all this devotion is supposed to be a large Tile with a rude figure in bas-relief upon it. I say supposed, because since the time it was found (for it was found in the earth in ploughing) only two people have seen it; the one was, by good luck, a saint; the other was struck blind for his presumption. Ever since she has been covered with seven veils; nevertheless, those who approach her tabernacle cast their eyes down, for fear they should spy her through all her veils. Such is the history, as I had it from the Lady of the house where I stood to see her pass; with many other circumstances; all which she firmly believes, and ten thousand besides.

We shall go to Venice in about six weeks, or sooner. A number of German troops are upon their march into this State, in case the King of Naples thinks proper to attack it. It is certain he has asked the Pope's leave for his troops to pass through his country. The Tuscans in general are much discontented, and foolish enough to wish for a Spanish government, or any rather than this. * * * *

XXXIII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, April 21, 1741.

I KNOW not what degree of satisfaction it will give you to be told that we shall set out from hence the 24th of this month, and not stop above a fortnight at any place in our way. This I feel, that you are the principal pleasure I have to hope for in my own country. Try at least to make me imagine myself not indifferent to you; for I must own I have the vanity of desiring to be esteemed by somebody, and would choose that somebody should be one whom I esteem as much as I do you. As I am recommending myself to your love, methinks I ought to send you my picture (for I am no more what I was, some circumstances excepted, which I hope I need not particularize to you); you must add then, to your former idea, two years of age, a reasonable quantity of dullness, a great deal of silence, and something that rather resembles, than is, thinking; a confused notion of many strange and fine things that have swum before my eyes for some time, a want of love for general society, indeed an inability to it. On the good side you may add a sensibility for what others feel, and indulgence for their faults and weaknesses, a love of truth, and detestation of every thing else. Then you are to deduct a little impertinence, a little laughter, a great deal of

pride, and some spirits. These are all the alterations I know of, you perhaps may find more. Think not that I have been obliged for this reformation of manners to reason or reflection, but to a severer school-mistress, Experience. One has little merit in learning her lessons, for one cannot well help it; but they are more useful than others, and imprint themselves in the very heart. I find I have been haranguing in the style of the Son of Sirach, so shall finish here, and tell you that our route is settled as follows: First to Bologna for a few days, to hear the Viscontina sing; next to Reggio, where is a Fair. Now, you must know, a Fair here is not a place where one eats gingerbread or rides upon hobby-horses; here are no musical clocks, nor tall Leicestershire women; one has nothing but masquing, gaming, and singing. If you love operas, there will be the most splendid in Italy, four tip-top voices, a new theatre, the Duke and Duchess in all their pomps and vanities. Does not this sound magnificent? Yet is the city of Reggio but one step above Old Brentford. Well; next to Venice by the 11th of May, there to see the old Doge wed the Adriatic Whore. Then to Verona, so to Milan, so to Marseilles, so to Lyons, so to Paris, so to West, &c. in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Eleven months, at different times, have I passed at Florence; and yet (God help me) know not either people or language. Yet the place and

the charming prospects demand a poetical farewell, and here it is.

* * * *

I will send you, too, a pretty little Sonnet of a Sig^{r}. Abbate Buondelmonte, with my imitation of it.

* * * *

Here comes a letter from you.—I must defer giving my opinion of *Pausanias till I can see the whole, and only have said what I did in obedience to your commands. I have spoken with such freedom on this head, that it seems but just you should have your revenge; and therefore I send you the beginning not of an Epic Poem, but of †a Metaphysic one. Poems and Metaphysics (say you, with your spectacles on) are inconsistent things. A metaphysical poem is a contradiction in terms. It is true, but I will go on. It is Latin too to increase the absurdity. It will, I suppose, put you in mind of the man who wrote a treatise of Canon Law in Hexameters. Pray help me to the description of a mixt mode, and a little Episode about Space.

Mr. Walpole and Mr. Gray set out from Florence

* Some part of a Tragedy under that title, which Mr. West had begun; but I do not find amongst Mr. Gray's papers either the sketch itself, or Mr. Gray's free critique upon it, which he here mentions.—*Mason.*

† The beginning of the first book of a didactic Poem, "De Principiis Cogitandi." The fragment which he now sent contained the first 53 lines.—*Mason.*

at the time specified in the foregoing Letter. When Mr. Gray left Venice, which he did the middle of July following, he returned home through Padua, Verona, Milan, Turin, and Lyons. From all which places he writ either to his Father or Mother with great punctuality: but merely to inform them of his health and safety; about which (as might be expected) they were now very anxious, as he travelled with only a 'Laquais de Voyage.' These letters do not even mention that he went out of his way to make a second visit to the Grande Chartreuse,* and there wrote in the Album of the Fathers the following Alcaic† Ode, with which I conclude this Section.—*Mason.*

* He was at Turin the 15th of August, and began to cross the Alps the next day. On the 25th he reached Lyons; therefore it must have been between these two dates that he made this visit.—*Mason.*

† We saw in the 8th and 11th letters how much Mr. Gray was struck with the awful scenery which surrounds the Chartreuse, at a time his mind must have been in a far more tranquil state than when he wrote this excellent Ode. It is marked, I think, with all the finest touches of his melancholy Muse, and flows with such an originality of expression, that one can hardly lament he did not honour his own language by making it the vehicle of this noble imagery and pathetic sentiment.—*Mason.*

*** It may perhaps be necessary to observe that all the Poems mentioned as inclosed in these Letters may be found in the First Volume of this Work, in the order in which they occurred here.—*Ed.*

SECTION THE THIRD.

I.* MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

I WRITE to make you write, for I have not much to tell you. I have recovered no spirits as yet; but, as I am not displeased with my company, I sit purring by the fire-side, in my arm-chair, with no small satisfaction. I read too sometimes, and have begun Tacitus, but have not yet read enough to judge of him; only his Pannonian sedition in the first book of his annals, which is just as far as I have got, seemed to me a little tedious. I have no more to say, but to desire you will write letters of a handsome length, and always answer me within a reasonable space of time, which I leave to your discretion.

Popes, March 28, 1742.

P. S. The new Dunciad! qu'en pensez vous?

* This letter is inserted as introductory only to the answer which follows.—*Mason.*

I. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

[illegible] to the country, and that easy indolence
my you enjoy there, to restore you your he
and spirits; and doubt not but, when the
grows warm enough to tempt you from your
side, you will like all other things: be the b
for its influence. He is my old friend, an
excellent nurse, I assure you. Had it not
for him, life had often been to me intoler
Pray do not imagine that Tacitus, of all aut
in the world, can be tedious. An annalist,
know, is by no means master of his subject;
I think one may venture to say, that if those
nonian affairs are tedious in his hands, in anot
they would have been insupportable. How
fear not, they will soon be over, and he will r
ample amends. A man, who could join the
liant of wit and concise sententiousness pec
to that age, with the truth and gravity of b
times, and the deep reflection and good sen
the best moderns, cannot choose but have s
thing to strike you. Yet what I admire in
above all this, is his detestation of tyranny,
the high spirit of liberty that every now and
breaks out, as it were, whether he would o
I remember a sentence in his Agricola that (

cise as it is) I always admired for saying much in a little compass. He speaks of Domitian, who upon seeing the last will of that General, where he had made him Coheir with his Wife and Daughter, "Satis constabat lætatum eum, velut honore, judicioque: tam cæca & corrupta mens assiduis adulationibus erat, ut nesciret a bono patre non scribi hæredem, nisi malum principem."

As to the Dunciad, it is greatly admired: the Genii of Operas and Schools, with their attendants, the pleas of the Virtuosos and Florists, and the yawn of dulness in the end, are as fine as any thing he has written. The Metaphysicians' part is to me the worst; and here and there a few ill-expressed lines, and some hardly intelligible.

I take the liberty of sending you a long speech of Agrippina; much too long, but I could be glad you would retrench it. Aceronia, you may remember, had been giving quiet counsels. I fancy, if it ever be finished, it will be in the nature of Nat. Lee's Bedlam Tragedy, which had twenty-five acts and some odd scenes.

The speech herewith sent to Mr. West was the concluding one of the first scene of Agrippina, which I believe was begun the preceding winter.—*Mason.*

III. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Popes, April 4, 1742.

I own in general I think Agrippina's speech t long;* but how to retrench it I know not: But have something else to say, and that is in relati to the style, which appears to me too antiquate Racine was of another opinion; he no whe gives you the phrases of Ronsard: His langua is the language of the times, and that of t purest sort; so that his French is reckoned standard. I will not decide what style is fit f our English stage; but I should rather choose o that bordered upon Cato, than upon Shakespe One may imitate (if one can) Shakespear's mann his surprising strokes of true nature, his expre sive force in painting characters, and all his oth beauties; preserving at the same time our o language. Were Shakespear alive now, he wo write a different style from what he did. Th are my sentiments upon these matters: Perha

* The Editor has obviated this objection, not by trenching, but by putting part of it into the mouth of A ronia, and by breaking it in a few other places. Originall was one continued speech from the line "Thus ever gr and undisturbed Reflection" to the end of the sce which was undoubtedly too long for the lungs of a Actress.—*Mason.*

I am wrong, for I am neither a Tarpa, nor am I quite an Aristarchus. You see I write freely both of you and Shakespear; but it is as good as writing not freely, where you know it is acceptable.

I have been tormented within this week with a most violent cough; for when once it sets up its note, it will go on, cough after cough, shaking and tearing me for half an hour together; and then it leaves me in a great sweat, as much fatigued as if I had been labouring at the plough. All this description of my cough in prose, is only to introduce another description of it in verse, perhaps not worth your perusal; but it is very short, and besides has this remarkable in it, that it was the production of four o'clock in the morning, while I lay in my bed tossing and coughing, and all unable to sleep.

Ante omnes morbos importunissima tussis,
Quâ durare datur, traxitque sub ilia vires:
Dura etenim versans imo sub pectore regna,
Perpetuo exercet teneras luctamine costas,
Oraque distorquet, vocemque immutat anhelam:
Nec cessare locus: sed sævo concita motu
Molle domat latus, & corpus labor omne fatigat:
Unde molesta dies, noctemque insomnia turbant.
Nec tua, si mecum Comes hic jucundus adesses,
Verba juvare queant, aut hunc lenire dolorem
Sufficiant tua vox dulcis, nec vultus amatus.

Do not mistake me, I do not condemn Tacitus: I was then inclined to find him tedious: The

German sedition sufficiently made up for it; and the speech of Germanicus, by which he reclaims his soldiers, is quite masterly. Your New Dunciad I have no conception of. I shall be too late for our dinner if I write any more. Yours.

IV. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

London, April, Thursday.

You are the first who ever made a Muse of a Cough; to me it seems a much more easy task to versify in one's sleep, (that indeed you were of old famous for*) than for want of it. Not the wakeful nightingale (when she had a cough) ever sung so sweetly. I give you thanks for your warble, and wish you could sing yourself to rest. These wicked remains of your illness will sure give way to warm weather and gentle exercise; which I hope you will not omit as the season advances. Whatever low spirits and indolence, the effect of them, may advise to the contrary, I pray you add five steps to your walk daily for my sake; by the help of which, in a month's time, I propose to set you on horseback.

I talked of the Dunciad as concluding you had seen it; if you have not, do you choose I should

* I suppose at Eton School.—*Mason.*

get and send it you? I have myself, upon your recommendation, been reading Joseph Andrews. The incidents are ill laid and without invention; but the characters have a great deal of nature, which always pleases even in her lowest shapes. Parson Adams is perfectly well; so is Mrs. Slipslop, and the story of Wilson; and throughout he shews himself well read in Stage-Coaches, Country Squires, Inns, and Inns of Court. His reflections upon high people and low people, and misses and masters, are very good. However the exaltedness of some minds (or rather as I shrewdly suspect their insipidity and want of feeling or observation) may make them insensible to these light things, (I mean such as characterize and paint nature) yet surely they are as weighty and much more useful than your grave discourses upon the mind,* the passions, and what not. Now as the paradisaical pleasures † of the Mahometans consist in playing upon the flute and

* He seems here to glance at Hutcheson, the disciple of Shaftsbury: of whom he had not a much better opinion, than of his master.—*Mason.*

† Whimsically put.—But what shall we say of the present taste of the French, when a writer whom Mr. Gray so justly esteemed as M. Marivaux is now held in such contempt, that *Marivauder* is a fashionable phrase amongst them, and signifies neither more nor less, than our own fashionable phrase of *prosing?* As to Crebillon 'twas his "Egaremens du Cœur & de l'Esprit" that our author chiefly esteemed; he had not, I believe, at this time published his

lying with Houris, be mine to read eternal new romances of Marivaux and Crebillon.

You are very good in giving yourself the trouble to read and find fault with my long harangues. Your freedom (as you call it) has so little need of apologies, that I should scarce excuse your treating me any otherwise; which, whatever compliment it might be to my vanity, would be making a very ill one to my understanding. As to matter of stile, I have this to say: The language of the age * is never the language of poetry; except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost every one, that has written, has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives: Nay sometimes words of their own composition or invention. Shakespear and Milton have been

more licentious pieces.—*Mason.* See West's Letter to Walpole on Crebillon.—Walpole's Works, vol. iv. p. 246. "*Crebillon* is entirely out of fashion, and *Marivaux* a proverb. *Marivauder* and *Marivaudage* are established terms for being prolix and tiresome." Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 358. When Mr. Walpole was at Paris, he associated much with the younger Crebillon, the Author of these Pieces, and Buffon.—*Ed.*

* Nothing can be more just than this observation; and nothing more likely to preserve our poetry from falling into insipidity, than pursuing the rules here laid down for supporting the diction of it; particularly with respect to the Drama.—*Mason.*

reat creators this way; and no one more licen-
ous than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually
orrow expressions from the former. Let me
ive you some instances from Dryden, whom
very body reckons a great master of our poetical
ngue.——Full of *museful mopeings*—unlike the
im of love—a pleasant *beverage*—a *roundelay*
love—stood silent in his *mood*—with knots
nd *knares* deformed—his *ireful mood*—in proud
rray—his *boon* was granted—and *disarray* and
ameful rout—*wayward* but wise—*furbished*
r the field—the *foiled doddered* oaks—*disherited*
-smouldering flames—*retchless* of laws—*crones*
d and ugly—the *beldam* at his side—the
randam-hag—*villanize* his Father's fame.——
ut they are infinite: And our language not
eing a settled thing (like the French) has an
ndoubted right to words of an hundred years old,
rovided antiquity have not rendered them unin-
lligible. In truth, Shakespear's language is
ne of his principal beauties; and he has no less
dvantage over your Addisons and Rowes in this,
an in those other great excellences you mention.
very word in him is a picture. Pray put me
e following lines into the tongue of our modern
ramatics:

> But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
> Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass:
> I, that am rudely stampt, and want love's majesty
> To strut before a wanton ambling nymph:

I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up—

And what follows. To me they appear untranslatable; and if this be the case, our language is greatly degenerated. However, the affectation of imitating Shakespear may doubtless be carried too far; and is no sort of excuse for sentiments ill-suited, or speeches ill-timed, which I believe is a little the case with me. I guess the most faulty expressions may be these—*silken* son of *dalliance*—*drowsier* pretensions—wrinkled *beldams*—*arched* the hearer's brow and *riveted* his eyes in *fearful extasie*. These are easily altered or omitted: and indeed if the thoughts be wrong or superfluous, there is nothing easier than to leave out the whole. The first ten or twelve lines are, I believe, the best;* and as for the rest, I was betrayed into a good deal of it by Tacitus; only what he has said in five words, I imagine I have said in fifty lines. Such is the misfortune of imitating the inimitable. Now, if you are of my opinion, una litura may do the business better than a dozen; and you need not fear unravelling my web. I am a sort of spider; and have little else to do but spin it over

* The lines which he means here are from—*thus ever grave and undistured reflection* to *Rubellius lives*. For the part of the scene which he sent in his former letter began there.—*Mason*.

again, or creep to some other place and spin there. Alas! for one who has nothing to do but amuse himself, I believe my amusements are as little amusing as most folks. But no matter; it makes the hours pass; and is better than ἐν ἀμαθίᾳ καὶ ἀμεσίᾳ καταβιῶναι. Adieu.

V. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

To begin with the conclusion of your letter which is Greek, I desire that you will quarrel no more with your manner of passing you time. In my opinion it is irreproachable, especially as it produces such excellent fruit; and if I, like a saucy bird, must be pecking at it, you ought to consider that it is because I like it. No una litura I beg you, no unravelling of your web, dear Sir! only pursue it a little further, and then one shall be able to judge of it a little better. You know the crisis of a play is in the first act; its damnation or salvation wholly rests there. But till that first act is over, every body suspends his vote; so how do you think I can form, as yet, any just idea of the speeches in regard to their length or shortness? The connection and symmetry of such little parts with one another must naturally escape me, as not having the plan of the whole in my head; neither can I decide about the thoughts

whether they are wrong or superfluous ; they may have some future tendency which I perceive not. The style only was free to me, and there I find we are pretty much of the same sentiment : for you say the affectation of imitating Shakespear may doubtless be carried too far; I say as much and no more. For old words we know are old gold, provided they are well chosen. Whatever Ennius was, I do not consider Shakespear as a dunghill in the least: On the contrary, he is a mine of ancient ore, where all our great modern poets have found their advantage. I do not know how it is ; but his old expressions* have more energy in them than ours, and are even more adapted to poetry ; certainly, where they are judiciously and sparingly inserted, they add a certain grace to the composition ; in the same manner as Poussin gave a beauty to his pictures by his knowledge in the ancient proportions : But should he, or any other painter, carry the imitation too far, and neglect that best of models Nature, I am afraid it would prove a very flat performance. To finish this long

* Shakespear's energy does not arise so much from these old expressions, (most of which were not old in his time) but from his artificial management of them. This artifice in the great Poet is developed with much exactness by Dr. Hurd in his excellent note on this passage in Horace's Ep. ad Pisones.

" Dixeris egregiè, notum si callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum."

See Hurd's Horace, Vol. 1st. Edit. 4th, p. 49.—Mason.

riticism: I have this further notion about old ords revived, (is not this a pretty way of finishng?) I think them of excellent use in tales; they dd a certain drollery to the comic, and a romantic ravity to the serious, which are both charming ı their kind; and this way of charming, Dryden nderstood very well. One need only read Milton) acknowledge the dignity they give the Epic. ut now comes my opinion that they ought to be sed in Tragedy more sparingly, than in most inds of poetry. Tragedy is designed for public epresentation, and what is designed for that hould be certainly most intelligible. I believe alf the audience that come to Shakespear's play o not understand the half of what they hear.—But nissons enfin.—Yet one word more.—You think he ten or twelve first lines the best, now I am or the fourteen last;* add, that they contain not ne word of antientry.

I rejoice you found amusement in Joseph Anrews. But then I think your conceptions of 'aradise a little upon the Bergerac. Les Lettres u Seraphim R. à Madame la Cherubinesse de Q. What a piece of extravagance would there be!

And now you must know that my body con-

* He means the conclusion of the first scene.—But here nd throughout his criticism on old words, he is not so onsistent as his correspondent; for he here insists that ll antientry should be struck out, and in a former passage e admits it may be used sparingly.—*Mason.*

tinues weak and enervate. And for my animal spirits they are in perpetual fluctuation: Some whole days I have no relish, no attention for any thing! at other times I revive, and am capable of writing a long letter, as you see; and though I do not write speeches, yet I translate them. When you understand what speech, you will own that it is a bold and perhaps a dull attempt. In three words, it is prose, it is from Tacitus, it is of Germanicus. Peruse, perpend, pronounce.*

VI. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

London, April, 1742.

I SHOULD not have failed to answer your letter immediately, but I went out of town for a little while, which hindered me. Its length (besides the pleasure naturally accompanying a long letter from you) affords me a new one, when I think it is a symptom of the recovery of your health, and flatter myself that your bodily strength returns in proportion. Pray do not forget to mention the progress you make continually. As to Agrippina, I begin to be of your opinion; and find myself

* This speech I omit to print, as I have generally avoided to publish mere translations either of Mr. Gray or his friend.—*Mason.*

as women are of their children) less enamoured of my productions the older they grow. *She is laid up to sleep till next summer; so bid her good night. I think you have translated Tacitus very justly, that is, freely; and accommodated his thoughts to the turn and genius of our language; which, though I commend your judgment, is no commendation of the English tongue, which is too diffuse, and daily grows more and more enervate. One shall never be more sensible of this, than in turning an Author like Tacitus. I have been trying it in some parts of Thucydides (who has a little resemblance of him in his conciseness) and endeavoured to do it closely, but found it produced mere nonsense. If you have any inclination to see what figure Tacitus makes in Italian, I have a Tuscan

* He never after awakened her; and I believe this was occasioned by the strictures which his friend had made on his dramatic style; which (though he did not think them well founded, as they certainly were not) had an effect which Mr. West, we may believe, did not intend them to have. I remember some years after I was also the innocent cause of his delaying to finish his fine ode on the Progress of Poetry. I told him, on reading the part he showed me, that "though I admired it greatly, and thought that it breathed the very spirit of Pindar, yet I suspected it would by no means hit the public taste." Finding afterwards that he did not proceed in finishing it, I often expostulated with him on the subject; but he always replied, "No, you have thrown cold water upon it." I mention this little anecdote, to shew how much the opinion of a friend, even when it did not convince his judgment, affected his inclination.—*Mason.*

translation of Davanzati, much esteemed in Italy; and will send you the same speech you sent me; that is, if you care for it. In the mean time accept of * Propertius. * * *

VII. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Popes, May 5, 1742.

WITHOUT any preface, I come to your verses, which I read over and over with excessive pleasure, and which are at least as good as Propertius. I am only sorry you follow the blunders of Broukhusius, all whose insertions are nonsense. I have some objections to your antiquated words, and am also an enemy to Alexandrines; at least I do not like them in elegy. But after all, I admire your translation so extremely, that I cannot help repeating I long to shew you some little errors you are fallen into by following Broukhusius.† * * Were I with you now, and Propertius with your verses lay upon the table

* A translation of the first elegy of the second book in English rhyme; omitted for the reason given in the last note but one.—*Mason.* It is published in the edition of Mr. Matthias. Vol. ii. p. 87.—*Ed.*

† I have omitted here a paragraph or two, in which different lines of the Elegy were quoted, because I had previously omitted the translation of it.—*Mason.*

ween us, I could discuss this point in a moment;
; there is nothing so tiresome as spinning out a
ticism in a letter; doubts arise, and explana-
ns follow, till there swells out at least a volume
undigested observations: and all because you
not with him whom you want to convince.
ad only the Letters between Pope and Cromwell
proof of this; they dispute without end. Are
1 aware now that I have an interest all this
ile in banishing Criticism from our correspon-
ıce? Indeed I have; for I am going to write
vn a little Ode (if it deserves the name) for
ır perusal, which I am afraid will hardly stand
ıt test. Nevertheless I leave you at your full
erty; so here it follows.

ODE.

Dear Gray, that always in my heart
Possessest far the better part,
What mean these sudden blasts that rise
And drive the Zephyrs from the skies?
O join with mine thy tuneful lay,
And invocate the tardy May.

Come, fairest Nymph, resume thy reign!
Bring all the Graces in thy train!
With balmy breath and flowery tread,
Rise from thy soft ambrosial bed;
Where, in elysian slumber bound,
Embow'ring myrtles veil thee round.

Awake, in all thy glories drest,
Recall the Zephyrs from the west;

Restore the sun, revive the skies,
At mine and Nature's call, arise!
Great Nature's self upbraids thy stay,
And misses her accustom'd May.

See! all her works demand thy aid;
The labours of Pomona fade:
A plaint is heard from ev'ry tree;
Each budding flow'ret calls for thee;
The birds forget to love and sing;
With storms alone the forests ring.

Come then, with Pleasure at thy side
Diffuse thy vernal spirit wide;
Create, where'er thou turn'st thy eye
Peace, Plenty, Love, and Harmony;
Till ev'ry being share its part,
And Heav'n and Earth be glad at heart.

VIII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

London, May, 8, 1742.

I REJOICE to see you putting up your prayers to the May: She cannot choose but come at such a call. It is as light and genteel as herself. You bid me find fault; I am afraid I cannot; however I will try. The first stanza (if what you say to me in it did not make me think it the best) I should call the worst of the five (except the fourth line.) The two next are very picturesque, Miltonic, and musical; her bed is so soft and so

snug that I long to lie with her. But those two lines "Great nature" are my favourites. The exclamation of the flowers is a little step too far. The last stanza is full as good as the second and third; the last line bold, but I think not too bold. Now, as to myself and my translation, pray do not call names. I never saw Broukhusius in my life. It is Scaliger who attempted to range Propertius in order; who was, and still is, in sad condition.* * * * * You see, by what I sent you, that I converse as usual, with none but the dead: They are my old friends, and almost make me long to be with them. You will not wonder, therefore, that I, who live only in times past, am able to tell you no news of the present. I have finished the Peloponnesian war much to my honour, and a tight conflict it was, I promise you. I have drank and sung with Anacreon for the last fortnight, and am now feeding sheep with Theocritus. Besides, to quit my figure, (because it is foolish) I have run over Pliny's Epistles and Martial ἐκ παρέργου; not to mention Petrarch, who, by the way, is sometimes very tender and natural. I must needs tell you three lines in Anacreon, where the expression seems to me inimitable. He is describing hair as he would have it painted.

* Here some criticism on the Elegy is omitted for a former reason.—*Mason.*

'Ελικας δ ἐλευθέρος μοι
Πλοκάμων ἄτακτα συνθεὶς
'Αφὲς ὡς θέλεσι κεῖθαι.

Guess, too, where this is about a dimple.

Sigilla in mento impressa Amoris digitulo
Vestigio demonstrant mollitudinem.

IX. MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Popes, May 11, 1742.

YOUR fragment is in Aulus Gellius;* and both it and your Greek delicious. But why are you thus melancholy? I am so sorry for it, that you see I cannot forbear writing again the very first opportunity; though I have little to say, except to expostulate with you about it. I find you converse much with the dead, and I do not blame you for that; I converse with them too, though not indeed with the Greek. But I must condemn you for your longing to be with them. What, are there no joys among the living? I could almost cry out with Catullus,† "Alphene immemor, atque unanimis false sodalibus!" But to turn an accusation thus upon another, is ungenerous; so I will take my leave of you for the present with a "Vale, et vive paulisper cum vivis."

* The fragment is not to be found in Aulus Gellius, but in Mori Marcellus, under the word "Mollitudo."—*Ed.*

† See Catulli Carm. xxx. ver. 1.

X. MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

London, May 27, 1742.

MINE, you are to know, is a white Melancholy, or rather Leucocholy for the most part; which, though it seldom laughs or dances, nor ever amounts to what one calls Joy or Pleasure, yet is a good easy sort of a state, and ça ne laisse que de s'amuser. The only fault of its insipidity; which is apt now and then to give a sort of Ennui, which makes one form certain little wishes that signify nothing. But there is another sort, black indeed, which I have now and then felt, that has somewhat in it like Tertullian's rule of faith, Credo quia impossibile est; for it believes, nay, is sure of every thing that is unlikely, so it be but frightful; and on the other hand excludes and shuts its eyes to the most possible hopes, and every thing that is pleasurable; from this the Lord deliver us! for none but he and sunshiny weather can do it. In hopes of enjoying this kind of weather, I am going into the country for a few weeks, but shall be never the nearer any society; so, if you have any charity, you will continue to write. My life is like Harry the Fourth's * supper of Hens, "Poulets à la broche,

* Francis the First's supper of Hens, v. Boccaccio.
Rogers.

Poulets en Ragôut, Poulets en Hâchis, Poule
Fricasées." Reading here, Reading there; no
but books with different sauces. Do not l
lose my desert then; for though that be Re
too, yet it has a very different flavour. The
seems to be come since your invitation; a
propose to bask in her beams and dress me i
roses.

Et Caput in vernâ semper habere rosâ.*

I shall see Mr. * * and his Wife, nay, a
Child too, for he has got a Boy. Is it not c
consider one's Cotemporaries in the grave
of Husband and Father? There is my
* * and * * *,† they are Statesmen: D
you remember them dirty boys playing at cri
As for me, I am never a bit the older, n
bigger, nor the wiser than I was then: N
for having been beyond sea. Pray how are

I send you an inscription for a wood joini
a park of mine; (it is on the confines of
Cithœron, on the left hand as you go to T
you know I am no friend to hunters, and h
be disturbed by their noise.‡

* Propert. iii. 3. 44.

† Lord Sandwich and Lord Halifax. Quære? Eton in mine and Mr. Gray's time; and both early Ministry. Cole, MS. note.

‡ In the 12th Letter of the first Section, Mr. Gr of his friend's translation of an Epigram of Posi

* * * * ‡

Here follows also the beginning of an Heroic Epistle; but you must give me leave to tell my own story first, because Historians differ. Massinissa was the son of Gala King of the Masyli; and, when very young at the head of his father's army, gave a most signal overthrow to Syphax, King of the Massæsylians, then an ally of the Romans. Soon after Asdrubal, son of Gisgo the Carthaginian General, gave the beautiful Sophonisba, his daughter, in marriage to the young prince. But this marriage was not consummated on account of Massinissa's being obliged to hasten into Spain, there to command his father's troops, who were auxiliaries of the Carthaginians. Their affairs at this time began to be in a bad condition; and they thought it might be greatly for their interest, if they could bring over Syphax to themselves. This in time they actually effected; and to strengthen their new alliance, commanded Asdrubal to give his daughter to Syphax. (It is probable their ingratitude to Massinissa arose from the great change of affairs, which had happened among the Massylians during his absence; for his father and

"Græcam illam ἀφελείαν mirificè sapit." The learned reader, I imagine, will readily give this tetrastic the same character.—*Mason.*

‡ Here followed the Greek Epigram, printed among the Poems.

uncle were dead, and a distant relation of the
family had usurped the throne.) Sophonisba
accordingly married to Syphax; and Massir
enraged at the affront, became a friend to the
mans. They drove the Carthaginians before
out of Spain, and carried the war into Africa
feated Syphax, and took him prisoner; upon w
Cirtha (his capital) opened her gates to Lælius
Massinissa. The rest of the affair, the marr
and the sending of poison, every body kn
This is partly taken from Livy, and partly
Appian.

* * * *

SECTION THE FOURTH.

I. MR. GRAY TO MR. WHARTON.

MY DEAR WHARTON,

It is a long time since I ought to have returned you my thanks for the pleasure of your letter, I should say, the prodigy of your letter, for such a thing has not happened above twice within the last age to mortal man, and no one here can conceive what it may portend. Mr. Trollope, I suppose, has told you how I was employed a part of the time; how, by my own indefatigable application for these ten years past, and by the care and vigilance of that worthy magistrate the Man-in-Blew,* (who, I'll assure you, has not spared his labour, nor could have done more for his own son) I am got half way to the Top † of Jurisprudence, and bid as fair as another body to open

* Servant of the Vice-Chancellor's for the time being, usually known by the name of Blue-coat, whose business it is to attend Acts for Degrees.—*Mason.* It may perhaps hardly be necessary to say, that the word *Blew* is generally so spelt in Mr. Gray's manuscript Letters; it was the orthography of the time.—*Ed.*

† i. e. Batchelor of Civil Law.—*Mason.*

a case of impotency with all decency and circumspection: you see my ambition: I do not doubt but some thirty years hence I shall convince the world, and you, that I am a very pretty young fellow, and may come to shine in a profession, perhaps the noblest in the world, next to man-midwifery. As for yours; if your distemper and you can but agree about going to London, I may reasonably expect, in a much shorter time, to see you in your three cornered villa, doing the honours of a well furnished table with as much dignity, as rich a mien, and as capacious a belly as Dr. Mead. Methinks I see Dr. Askew at the lower end of it, lost in admiration of your goodly person and parts, cramming down his envy (for it will rise) with the wing of a pheasant, and drowning it in neat Burgundy. But not to tempt your asthma too much with such a prospect, I should think you might be almost as happy as this, even in the country: but you know best; and I should be sorry to say any thing that might stop you in the career of glory. Far be it from me to hamper the wheels of your gilded chariot. Go on, Sir Thomas; and when you die (for even physicians must die) may the faculty in Warwick Lane erect your statue in Sir John Cutler's own niche.

As to Cambridge, it is as it was, for all the world; and the people are as they were, and Mr. Trollope is as he was, that is, half-ill, half-well; I wish with all my heart they were all

better, but what can one do? There is no news, only I think I heard a whisper, as if the Vice-Chancellor should be with child; (but I beg you not to mention this, for I may come into trouble about it;) there is some suspicion that the Professor of Mathematics had a hand in the thing. Dr. Dickens says the University will be obliged to keep it, as it was got in Magistratu.

I was going to tell you how sorry I am for your illness, but, I hope, it is too late to be sorry now; I can only say that I really *was* very sorry: may you live a hundred Christmases, and eat as many collars of brawn stuck with rosemary. Adieu. I am sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

Dec. 27, 1742, Cambridge.

Wont you come to the jubilee? Dr. Long* is to dance a saraband and hornpipe, of his own

* See Life of Dr. Long, in Nichols' Ed. of J. Taylor's Tracts, p. liv.—lviii. there is a copy of verses by R. Long, Master of Pembroke, on the death of Fred. P. of Wales, the last in the volume. The English Poems collected from the Oxford and Cambridge verses on the death of Fred. P. of Wales. Edinb. 1751. beginning,

Yes! I will weep for thy untimely fate,
Oh! much lov'd Prince! that part I can perform.
To take my portion of the general grief,
Although by seventy winters' freezing blasts,
All chill'd my blood, and damp'd poetic fire.

In this volume, among the *Oxford* contributors, are

invention, without lifting either foot once from the ground.*

II. MR. GRAY TO MR. WHARTON.

MY DEAR WHARTON,

THIS is only to entreat you would order mes gens to clean out the apartments, spread the carpets, air the beds, put up the tapestry, unpaper the frames, &c.; fit to receive a great potentate, who comes down in the flying coach, drawn by green dragons, on Friday, the 10th instant. As the ways are bad, and the dragons a little out of repair, (for they don't actually fly, but only go, like a lame ostrich, something between a hop and a trot,) it will probably be late when he lands, so he would not choose to be known, and desires there may be no bells nor bonfires; but as per-

S. Spence, J. Musgrave, J. Heskin, B. Kennicott, R. Louth; among the *Cambridge*, F. Neville, Erasm. Darwin, R. Cumberland, and R. Long.—*Ed.*

* If the Reader will be at the trouble to collate this Letter with Letter I. Sect. IV. of Mason's Edition, he will perceive the numerous verbal alterations, and transpositions introduced by the Editor of that volume. They are far too numerous and too important, to be merely the effect of a negligent transcription.—*Ed.*

sons incog. love to be seen, he will slip into the coffee house. Is Mr. Trollope among you? good lack! he will pull off my head for never writing to him, oh Conscience, Conscience!

London, October 8, [44 or 45.]

III. MR. GRAY TO MR. WHARTON.

I AM not lost; here am I at Stoke, whither I came on Tuesday, and shall be again in town on Saturday, and at Cambridge on Wednesday or Thursday, you may be anxious to know what has past. I wrote a note the night I came, and immediately received a very civil answer. I went the following evening to see the *party*, (as Mrs. Foible says) was something abashed at his confidence: he came to meet me, kissed me on both sides with all the ease of one, who receives an acquaintance just come out of the country, squatted me into a Fauteuil, begun to talk of the town, and this and that and t'other, and continued with little interruption for three hours, when I took my leave very indifferently pleased, but treated with monstrous good-breeding, I supped with him next night (as he desired); *Ashton was there, whose formalities tickled me

* See Walpole's Letter to Mann, vol. ii. p. 371.—*Ed.*

inwardly, for he, (I found) was to be angry about the letter I had wrote him. However, in going home together our hackney-coach jumbled us into a sort of reconciliation: he hammered out somewhat like an excuse, and I received it very readily, because I cared not twopence, whether it were true or not, so we grew the best acquaintance imaginable, and I sate with him on Sunday some hours alone, when he informed me of abundance of anecdotes much to my satisfaction, and in short opened (I really believe) his heart to me, with that sincerity that I found I had still less reason to have a good opinion of him than (if possible) I ever had before. Next morning I breakfasted alone with Mr. Walpole; when we had all the eclaircissement* I ever expected, and I left him far better satisfied than I have been hitherto. When I return I shall see him again.

Such is the epitome of my four days. Mr. and Mrs. Simms and Mad^lle. Nanny have done the honours of Leaden Hall to a miracle, and all join

* It appears by this Letter, that the reconciliation which is mentioned as having taken place between Gray and Walpole, was, (as far at least as the former was concerned,) rather an act of civility and good-manners, than the re-establishment of a cordial and sincere attachment. I am now, by the kindness of a gentleman, to whom I have been more than once obliged, enabled to lay before the public, the real cause of their separation, on the authority of the late Mr. Isaac Reed; in whose handwriting, in Wakefield's Life of Gray, is the following

in a compliment to the Doctor. Your brother is well, the books are in good condition. Mad^me. Chenevix has frighted me with Ecritoires she asks three guineas for, that are not worth three half-pence: I have been in several shops and found nothing pretty. I fear it must be bespoke at last.

The day after I went you received a little letter directed to me, that seems wrote with a skewer, please to open it, and you will find a receipt of Dan. Adcock for ten pound, which I will beg you to receive of Gillham for me. If the letter miscarried, pray take care the money is paid to no one else. I expect to have a letter from you when I come to town, at your lodgings. Adieu, Sir, I am sincerely yours,

T. G.

Stoke, Thursday, 16th Nov. [1744 or 1745.]

note. "Mr. Roberts, of the Pell-office, who was likely to be well informed, told me at Mr. Deacon's, 19th April, 1799. That the quarrel between Gray and Walpole was occasioned by a suspicion Mr. Walpole entertained, that Mr. Gray had spoken ill of him, to some friends in England. To ascertain this, he clandestinely opened a letter, and resealed it, which Mr. Gray, with great propriety resented; there seems to have been but little cordiality afterwards between them."—*Ed.*

IV. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER TO MR. CHUTE.

* * * * * * Jews-harp, ask Mr. Whithed, whither when he goes to Heaven, he does not expect to see all his favourite Hens, all his dear little *Poules*, untimely victims of the pot and the spit, come pipping and gobling in a melodious voice about him; I know he does; there's nothing so natural. Poor Conti! is he going to be a Cherub? I remember here, (but he was not ripe then,) he had a very promising squeak with him, and that his mouth, when open, made an exact square. I have never been at Ranelagh Gardens, since they were opened, (for what does it signify to me,) but they do not succeed, people see it once, or twice, and so they go to Vauxhall; well, but is not it a very great design, very new, finely lighted, well, yes, ay, very fine truly, so they yawn and go to Vauxhall, and then it's too hot, and then it's too cold, and here's a wind, and there's a damp, and so the women go to bed, and the men to a —— House. You are to take notice, that in our Country, Delicacy and Indelicacy amount to much the same thing. The first will not be pleased with any thing, and the other cannot. However, to do us justice, I think we

are a reasonable, but by no means a pleasurable people; and to mend us we must have a dash of the French and Italian; yet I don't know how. Travelling does not produce its right effect.—I find I am talking, but you are to attribute it to my having at last found a Pen that writes.

You are so good, 'tis a shame to scold at you, but you never till now certified me, that you were at Casa Ambrosio. I did not know in what light to consider you. I had an Idea, but did not know where to put it, for an Idea must have a place per campeggiar bene. You were an Intaglia unset, a Picture without a frame, but now all is well; tho' I am not very sure yet, whether you are above stairs, or on the ground-floor, but by your mentioning the Terrazino, it must be the latter. Do the Frogs of Arno sing as sweetly as they did in my days? do you sup al fresco? Have you a Mugherino tree, and a *Nanny?* I fear, I don't spell this last word right, pray ask Mr. M. Oh! dear! I fear I was a blunderer about Hyacynths, for to be sure they cannot be taken out of the ground, till they have done blooming, and they are perhaps just now in flower. That you may know my *Place*, I am just going into the country, for one easy fortnight, and then in earnest intend to go to Cambridge, to Trinity Hall: my sole reason (as you know) is to look, as if——and when I feel it go against my stomach, I remember it was your Prescription, and so it

goes down. Look upon me, then, my dear Sir, in my proper light, and consider how necessary it is to me, to hear from you as often as you can bestow an hour upon me. I flatter myself, your kindness will try to get the better of your indolence, when you reflect how cruelly alone I must be in the midst of that crowd!

The remainder of this page I hope you will pardon me, if I dedicate to my good dear Mr. Mann. Sir, I had the pleasure of receiving your good dear letter, and only deferred thanking you till now, that I might be able to execute your little commission first, the contents of which I send to your Brother, along with this letter. But first let me enquire how you do? alas! Sir, you may call 'em Benevoli, or whatever soft names you please, but I much fear they don't understand their business, like our people with a thousand consonants. I perfectly believe Dr. Cocchis' good intentions, but he is not the executioner himself, and here it is not sufficient to wish well. If it were, I'm certain my wishes are fervent enough to be felt even at Florence, in spite of all the lands, and seas, and enemies that lie betwixt us. They are daily employed for your happiness, and will, I hope, be of more use to you, than they have been to myself. The Books I send you are the Etat de la France, 3 vol. fol. upon my word, an excellent book. He is a sensible, knowing Englishman, only had the misfortune to be born in France. Life of Ma-

homet by the same author, it is famous; you are desired to make no reflections, nor draw consequences, when you read it. Ld. Burleigh's Papers seem very curious, and well enough chose: by the way, they have lately published Thurlow's Papers here, in 7 vol. folio, out of which it would be hard to collect a Pocket volume worth having. Dr. Middleton's Cicero, 3 vol. and a letter on the Catholic religion worth your reading. Philip de Commines, 5 vol. the Louvre edition is much more splendid, but wants the supplement and notes, which are here. W^n. on the M^s. * a very impudent fellow, his dedications will make you laugh. Ludlow's Memoirs, 3 vol. as unorthodox in Politics, as the other in Religion. †2 lyttel Bookys tocheing Kyng James the Fyrst; very rare. Le Sopha, de Crebillon—Collect. of Plays, 10 vol. There are none of Shakspear, because you had better have all his works together, they come to about £7. 18*s.* 6*d.* the whole cargo. You will find among them 3 Parts of Marianne ‡ for Mr. Chute; if he has them already, how can I help it? why would he make no mention of Mad. de Thevire to one?

And now let me congratulate you as no longer

* Warburton, his Divine Legation of Moses, I suppose, is alluded to, or his Reflections on the Miraculous Powers. —*Ed.*

† Perhaps Sir Auth. Weldon's Memoirs of the Court of James the First, ed. 1650, and Aulicus Coquinariæ, 1650.

‡ Probably the Marianne of Marivaux.

a Min: but for del mondo veramente un Ministrone, and King of the Mediterranean. Pray your Majesty, give orders to your men of war, if they touch at Naples, to take care of ma collection, and be sure don't let them bombard Genoa. If you can bully the Pope out of the Apollo Belvidere, well and good: I'm not against it. I'm enchanted with your good sister, the Queen of Hungary; as old as I am, I could almost fight for her myself. See what it is to be happy. Every body will fight for those that have no occasion for them. Pray take care to continue so, but whether you do, or not, I am truly yours,

T. G.

July . . London.

The Parliament's up, and all the world are made Lords, and Secretaries, and Commissioners.

V. MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR, Cambridge, February 3, 1746.

You are so good to enquire after my usual time of coming to town: it is a season when even you, the perpetual friend of London, will, I fear, hardly be in it—the middle of June: and I commonly return hither in September; a month when I may more probably find you at home.

* Our defeat to be sure is a rueful affair for the honour of the troops; but the Duke is gone it seems with the rapidity of a cannon-bullet to undefeat us again.† The common people in town at least know how to be afraid: but we are such uncommon people here as to have no more sense of danger than if the battle had been fought when and where the battle of Cannæ was.

The perception of these calamities, and of their consequences, that we are supposed to get from books, is so faintly impressed, that we talk of war, famine, and pestilence, with no more apprehension than of a broken head, or of a coach overturned between York and Edinburgh.

I heard three people, sensible middle aged men (when the Scotch were said to be at Stamford, and actually were at Derby), talking of hiring a chaise to go to Caxton (a place in the high road) to see the Pretender and the Highlanders as they passed.

I can say no more for Mr. Pope (for what you keep in reserve may be worse than all the rest). It is natural to wish the finest writer, one of them, we ever had, should be an honest man. It is for

* Defeat at Falkirk, under General Hawley. V. Walpole's Letters to H. Mann, vol. ii. p. 120. See also Jacobite Memoirs, or Forbes' Papers, p. 89.—*Ed.*

† 'The Duke is gone post to Edinburgh, where he hoped to arrive to-night, if possible to relieve Stirling.' V. H. Walpole's Let. to Mann, vol. ii. p. 121.—*Ed.*

the interest even of that virtue, whose friend he professed himself, and whose beauties he sung, that he should not be found a dirty animal. But, however, this is Mr. Warburton's business, not mine, who may scribble his pen to the stumps and all in vain, if these facts are so. It is not from what he told me about himself that I thought well of him, but from a humanity and goodness of heart, ay, and greatness of mind, that runs through his private correspondence, not less apparent than are a thousand little vanities and weaknesses mixed with those good qualities, for nobody ever took him for a philosopher. If you know any thing of Mr Mann's * state of health and happiness, or the motions of Mr. Chute † homewards, it will be a particular favour to inform me of them, as I have not heard this half-year from them. I am sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

* Afterwards Sir Horace Mann, British Envoy at the Court of Tuscany.

† Mr. Chute appears to have returned to England in the Autumn of 1746, after a residence of several years at Florence. See Walpole's Letter to H. Mann, Oct. 2, 1746, (vol. ii. p. 181.) see his character drawn, p. 188, 230; for some verses by him, vide p. 360 of the same volume.—*Ed.*

VI. MR. GRAY TO J. CHUTE, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

THREE days ago as I was in the Coffee House very deep in advertisements, a servant came in and waked me (as I thought) with the name of Mr. Chute; for half a minute I was not sure, but that it was you transported into England, by some strange chance, the Lord knows how, till he brought me to a coach that seem'd to have lost its way, by looking for a needle in a bottle of hay. In it was a lady who said she was not you, but only a near relation, and was so good to give me a letter, with which I return'd to my den, in order to prey upon it. I had wrote to you but a few days ago, and am glad of so good an excuse to do it again, which I may the better do, as my last was all out, and nothing to the purpose, being design'd for a certain Mr. Chute at Rome, and not him at Florence.

I learn from it that I have been somewhat smarter than I ought, but (to shew you with how little malice) I protest I have not the least idea what it was. My memory would be better, did I read my own letters so often as I do yours: you must attribute it to a sort of kittenish disposition that scratches, where it means to caress. How-

ever, I repent neither, if 'tis that has made you write. I know, I need not ask pardon, for you have forgiven me: nay, I have a good mind, to complain myself—How could you say, that I designed to hurt you, because I knew you could feel. I hate the thoughts of it, and would not for the world wound anything that was sensible. 'Tis true, I should be glad to scratch the careless, or the foolish; but no armour is so impenetrable as indifference, and stupidity, and so I may keep my claws to myself. For another instance of the shortness of my memory, would you believe, I have so little knowledge of the Florentine History, as not to guess who the Lady Errant is, you mention? sure it can't be the R$^{di.}$ and her faithful swain, or may be M. G$^{di.}$ and the little abbé; what you do there so long I have no conception; if you stay at other places in proportion, I despair of ever seeing you again. 'Tis true indeed Mr. Mann is not every where; I am shock'd to think of his sufferings, but he of all men was born to suffer with a good grace. He is a Stoick without knowing it, and seems to think pain a pleasure. I am very sorry to compliment him upon such an occasion, and wish with all my heart, he were not so pleased. I much fear his books are gone already; but if not, to be sure he shall have Middleton and the Sofa;* it seems most people here are not such admirers of it as I was: but I wont give up an

* The Sofa of Crebillon, see p. 179.—*Ed.*

inch of it, for all that. Did I tell you about Mr. Garrick, that the town are horn-mad after: there are a dozen Dukes of a night at Goodmansfields sometimes, and yet I am stiff in the opposition. Our fifth Opera was the Olympiade, in which they retained most of Pergolesi's songs, and yet 'tis gone already, as if it had been a poor thing of Galuppis'. Two nights did I enjoy it all alone, snug in a nook of the gallery, but found no one in those regions had ever heard of Pergolesi, nay, I heard several affirm it was a composition of Pescetti's. Now there is a 6th sprung up, by the name of Cephalo and Procri. My Lady of Queensbury is come out against my Lady of Marlborough, and she has her spirit too, and her originality, but more of the woman, I think, than t'other. As to the facts, it don't signify two pence who's in the right; the manner of fighting, and character of the combatants is all: 'tis hoped old Sarah will at her again. A play of Mr. Glover's I am told, is preparing for the stage, call'd Boadicea; it is a fine subject, but I have not an extreme opinion of him. The invalides at Chelsea intend to present Ranelagh Gardens, as a nuisance, for breaking their first sleep with the sound of fiddles; it opens, I think, to-night. Messieurs the Commons are to ballot for 7 persons to-morrow, commission'd to state the public accounts, and they are to be such, who have no places, nor are any ways dependent on the King. The Committee have petitioned for all

papers relating to the Convention. A bill has pass'd the lower house, for indemnifying all who might subject themselves to penalties, by revealing any transaction with regard to the conduct of my Lord Orford, and to-morrow the Lords are summon'd about it. The wit of the times consists in Satyrical Prints; I believe there have been some hundreds within this month. If you have any hopeful young designer of caricaturas, that has a political turn, he may pick up a pretty subsistence here: let him pass thro' Holland to improve his taste by the way. We are all very sorry for poor Queen Hungary: but we know of a second battle, (which perhaps you may never hear of, but from me) as how Prince Lobbycock came up in the nick of time, and cut 120,000 of them all to pieces; and how the King of Prussia narrowly escap'd aboard a ship, and so got down the Dannub to Wolf-in-Bottle, where Mr. Mallyboyce lay encamped; and how the Hannoverians, with Prince Hissy-Castle, at their head, fell upon the French Mounseers, and took him away with all his treasure, among which is Pitt's diamond, and the great cistern—all this is firmly believed here, and a vast deal more: upon the strength of which we intend to declare war with France.

You are so obliging as to put me in mind of our last year's little expeditions; alas! Sir, they are past, and how many years will it be, at the rate you go on, before we can possibly renew

them in this country: in all probability I shall be gone first on a long expedition to that undiscover'd country, from whose bourn no traveller returns: however, (if I can) I will think of you, as I sail down the *River of Eternity*. I can't help thinking, that I should find no difference almost between this world, and t'other, (for I converse with none but the dead here,) only indeed I should receive nor write no more letters, (for the Post is not very well regulated). If you see the King of Naples, pray talk with him on this subject, for I see he is upon settling one between his country and Constantinople, and I take this to be but a little more difficult.

My dab of Musick, and Prints, you are very good to think of sending with your own, to which I will add a farther trouble, by desireing you to send me some of the roots of a certain Flower, which I have seen at Florence. It is a huge white Hyacynth tinged with pink, (Mr. M. knows what I mean, by the same token that they grow sometimes in the fat Gerina's *Boosom*,) I mean if they bear a reasonable price, which you will judge of for me: but don't give yourself any pains about it, for if they are not easily had, and at an easy rate, I am not at all eager for them. Do you talk of *Strumming?* ohi me! who have not seen the face of a *Haspical*, since I came home; no! I have hang'd up my Harp on the Willows: however, I look at my musick now and then, that I

may not forget it; for when you return, I intend to sing a song of thanksgiving, and praise the Lord with a cheerful noise of many-stringed instruments. Adieu! dear Sir, I am sincerely yours,

T. G.

O. S. London. Not forgetting my kiss-hands to Mr. Whithed.

M . . 1 . [torn.]

VII. MR. GRAY TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR,

WHAT do you choose I should think of a whole year's silence; have you absolutely forgot me, or do you not reflect, that it is from yourself alone I can have any information concerning you. I do not find myself inclined to forget you, the same regard for your Person, the same desire of seeing you again I felt when we parted, still continues with me as fresh as ever; don't wonder then if in spite of appearances, I try to flatter myself with the hopes of finding sentiments something of the same kind, however, buried in some dark corner of your heart; and perhaps more than half extinguished by long absence and various cares of a different nature. I will not alarm your indolence with a long letter, my demands are only three, and may be answer'd in as many words,—how you do? where you are? and when you return? if

you choose to add any thing farther, it will be a work of superer—— I will not write so long a word entire, least I fatigue your delicacy, and you may think it incumbent on you to answer it by another of equal dimensions. You believe me, I hope, with great sincerity, yours,

T. G.

P. S. For ought I know you may be in England. My very true compliments (not such as People make to one another) wait upon Mr. Whithed. He will be the most travelled Gentleman in Hampshire.

Oct. 25, Cambridge.

VIII. MR. GRAY TO MR. WHARTON.

You write so feelingly to little Mr. Brown, and represent your abandoned condition in terms so touching, that what gratitude could not effect in several months, compassion has brought about in a few days, and broke that strong attachment, or rather allegiance which I and all here owe to our sovereign lady and mistress, the president of presidents, and head of heads (if I may be permitted to pronounce her name, that ineffable Octogrammaton) the power of *Laziness*. You must know she had been pleased to appoint me (in preference to so many old servants of hers, who had spent

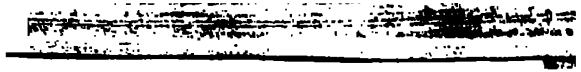
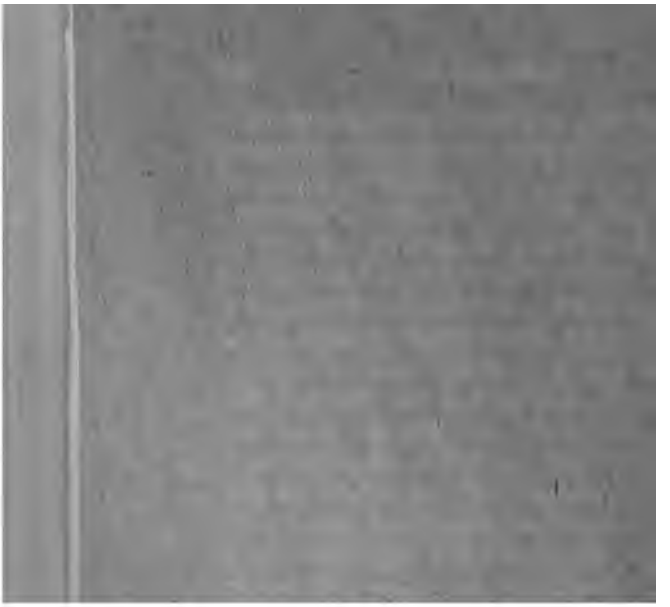
to enquire after the child) is but a puleing chitt yet, not a bit grown to speak of; I believe, poor thing! it has got the worms, that will carry it off at last. Oh Lord! I forgot to tell you, that Mr. Trollope and I are under a course of tar water, he for his present, and I for my future distempers; if you think it will kill me, send away a man and horse directly, for I drink like a fish. I should be glad to know how your —— goes on, and give you joy of it.

You are much in the right to have a taste for Socrates, he was a divine man. I must tell you, by way of the news of the place, that the other day, Mr. Traigneau (entering upon his Professorship) made an apology for him an hour long in the schools, and all the world, except Trinity College, brought in Socrates guilty. Adieu, dear Sir, and believe me your Friend and Servant,

T. G.

Cambridge, Thursday, April 26, 1746.

sent it in Mason's Edition. The passage about Socrates is so altered by Mason, as to be but little short of perfect nonsense.—*Ed.*

END OF VOL. II.

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